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MUSIC IN POETRY AND PROSE

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MUSIC IN POETRY & PROSE

EDITED BY ADA INGPEN.

Philadelphia David McKay Publisher
604-8 South Washington Square

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Printed in England

TO
R. I.

I ACKNOWLEDGE gratefully the kindness of the following authors, publishers, and other owners of copyrights, who have allowed me to include poems or prose extracts in this book: Mr. W. H. Chesson, for a poem by the late Mrs. Nora Chesson; Messrs. George Allen and Co., for a poem by W. Cory; Mr. A. D. Coleridge and Messrs. J. Nisbet and Co., Ltd., for two essays by the late Miss M. E. Coleridge; Madame Duclaux (Miss A. M. F. Robinson); Mr. Walter de la Mare; Mr. W. H. Davies; Mr. Bertram Dobell; Mr. Edmund W. Gosse; Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co., for a passage from George Gissing's "Thyrza"; Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer and his publishers, Messrs. Alston Rivers, Ltd.; Mr. Elkin Mathews, for a poem by Lionel Johnson; Mrs. Katharine Tynan Hinkson; Mr. G. B. Lefroy and Mr. Elliot Stock, for two poems by the late Rev. E. C. Lefroy; Mr. Andrew Lang and his publishers, Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co.; Miss Clementina Black, for two poems by the late Amy Levy; Mrs. Alice Meynell; Dr. A. Munthe and his publisher, Mr. John Murray; Sir Frank T. Marzials; Mr. H. W. Nevinson; Mrs. Rosa New-

march and her publishers, Mr. John Lane and Mr. Elkin Mathews; Mr. S. O'Sullivan and his publishers, Messrs. Maunsell and Co.; Mr. John Payne; Mrs. Dollie Radford; Mrs. William Sharp, for a poem by her late husband; Mr. Arthur Symons; Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, for a poem by the late Francis Thompson; Mr. John Murray, for several extracts from the letters of the Rev. T. Twining; Mr. C. de Boismaison, for a translation from Paul Verlaine; Mr. H. G. Wells; Mrs. Margaret L. Woods and her publishers, Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

A. M. I.

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I

PAN'S PIPES

Wilt thou have music? hark! Apollo plays
And twenty cagèd nightingales do sing.

William Shakespeare ("Taming of the Shrew").

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal Verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half regained Eurydice.

John Milton ("L'Allegro").

Hymn of Pan

From the forests and highlands,
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and the waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,

And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow,
Were silent with love—as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth
And of Heaven,—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth.
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Mænalus
I pursued a maiden, and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus;
It breaks in our bosom, and then we bleed.
All wept—as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood—
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

A Musical Instrument

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sat by the river),
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
  Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
  Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
  To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
  As a reed with the reeds in the river.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

A Sylvan Revel

WHAT ho! my shepherds, sweet it were
To fill with song this leafy glade.
Bring harp and flute. The gods have made
An hour for music. Daphnis there
Shall give the note with jocund blare
From out his horn. The rest will aid
With fifes and drums, and charm the shade,
And rout the dusky wings of care.
We'll pipe to fox and wolf and bear,
We'll wake the wood with rataplan,

Fetch every beast from every lair,
Make every creature dance who can.
Set every Satyr's hoof in air,
And tickle both the feet of Pan!

Edward Cracroft Lefroy.

From "A Priestess to Apollo"

. . . AFTERWARDS came the voice of a shepherd calling to his flock up the deep gorge of Pindus where the black ilex grows. With his cries the sound of a pipe was mingled; it had but three notes, but ah! with what sweetness its music filled the air, telling of peace and sunny weather. But joy was broken by the thud of drums, and I beheld the hosts of Ethiopia beating the ground with black and naked feet. In the face of the moon they shook the lance, and the ground was staked out with the heads of their enemies. Again I heard the sound of dancing, and saw a cleared circle among pines beside a northern sea; and on it danced a girl, her black hair whirling like a driven cloud; the brass and silver of her armlets jangled together; from the onlookers, swaying with her form, the jangle of innumerable brass and silver arose, and above it

shrilled the panting and long-drawn sighs of many lutes. Quicker and quicker grew the dance; the spotted furs rose and fell around the wild girl's limbs; the blaze of wooden logs turned her to crimson; she flickered like a tongue of flame upon the ground. Then the grey mists fell, and I beheld long lines of speechless men, moving solemnly through a land like thin grey snakes; they came from victorious war, but on a broad iron shield in front of them they carried their leader dead. With horns and muffled drums they told their deep-toned sorrow to the clouds. Then rose the triumph of long trumpets sounding together, note after note, and all with one blare of glory; and I saw long processions of white-robed priests moving towards a white temple upon a promontory, and praising the god with song and music as they went. But after the trumpets I heard the sighing of a free but vanquished people, and their low cries of anguish and defiance as the conqueror stamped them into the burnt and bloodstained ground, while now and then one among them would raise the thin echo of the songs they used to sing when freedom was theirs.

So I listened and gazed while scene after scene upon the world's face passed before me, and I seemed to understand the voice of all joy and

sorrow, from the singing of the little child who follows the cows down hill, to the lamentations of Asia over the Great King dead. Like strands in the interwoven work of the loom the voices of men and women sounded amid the cries of birds and beasts, the wailing of the wind, the rustle of trees, and the gulp and reiteration of the sea. So that the whole earth seemed to utter a music of pleasure and pain as she swung beneath the bridge of the Milky Way. Whether that music is heard at all by the moon and nearer stars, or whether the earth appears to them dumb as a dolphin, which loves melody indeed, but cannot sing—what prophet is wise enough to tell? But I could hear it, for the god granted me power; and at the sound of all that sadness and desire I was overcome as by the voice of Destiny, which Zeus himself obeys. And as the music grew I heard the far-off footsteps of the god, so that in wonder I cried aloud, and falling prone upon the steps of the shrine, I saw the temple and the inrushing people but for a moment, nor ever again thereafter, for the god took me to himself that I might be his handmaid in many lands.

Henry W. Nevinson.

Song to Pan

All ye woods, and trees, and bowers,
All ye virtues and ye powers
That inhabit in the lakes,
In the pleasant springs or brakes,
Move your feet
To our sound
Whilst we greet
All this ground
With his honour and his name
That defends our flocks from blame.

He is great, and he is just,
He is ever good, and must
Thus be honoured. Daffodillies,
Roses, pinks, and lovèd lilies,
Let us fling,
Whilst we sing,
Ever holy,
Ever holy,
Ever honoured, ever young!
Thus great Pan is ever sung.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

With Pipe and Flute

WITH pipe and flute the rustic Pan
Of old made music sweet for man ;
And wonder hushed the warbling bird,
And closer drew the calm-eyed herd,—
The rolling river slowlier ran.

Ah ! would,—ah ! would, a little span,
Some air of Arcady could fan
This age of ours, too seldom stirred
With pipe and flute !

But now for gold we plot and plan ;
And from Beersheba unto Dan
Apollo's self might pass unheard,
Or find the night-jar's note preferred ;—
Not so it fared, when time began,
With pipe and flute !

Austin Dobson.

Holiday in Arcadia

WOODMEN, shepherds, come away,
This is Pan's great holiday,
Throw off cares,
With your heaven-aspiring airs,
Help us to sing,
While valleys with your echoes ring.

Nymphs that dwell within these groves,
Leave your arbours, bring your loves,
Gather posies,
Crown your golden hair with roses;
As you pass
Foot like fairies on the grass.

Joy crown our bowers! Philomel,
Leave of Tereus' rape to tell.
Let trees dance,
As they at Thracian lyre did once;
Mountains play,
This is the shepherd's holiday.

Thomas Shirley.

The Sirens' Harmony

GENIUS. But else, in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Sirens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those who hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
To lull the daughters of Necessity,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measured motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould with gross unpurgèd ear.

John Milton ("ARCADES").

The Praises of Pan

SING his praises that doth keep
Our flocks from harm,
Pan, the father of our sheep;
And arm in arm
Tread we softly in a round,
Whilst the hollow neighbouring ground
Fills the music with her sound.

Pan, oh, great god Pan, to thee
Thus do we sing!
Thou that keep'st us chaste and free
As the young spring;
Ever be thy honour spoke,
From that place the morning broke
To that place day doth unyoke.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

Ode on a Grecian Urn

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness!
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flow'ry tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but thou unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;

Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tune:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! thou canst not shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

. . . . .

John Keats.

Apollo and Midas

To his sweet lute Apollo sang the motions of
the spheres,
The wondrous orders of the stars whose course
divides the years,
And all the mysteries above ;
But none of this could Midas move :
Which purchased him his ass's ears.

Then Pan with his rude pipe began the country
wealth t' advance,
To boast of cattle, flocks of sheep, and goats
on hills that dance,
With much more of his churlish kind,
That quite transported Midas' mind,
And held him wrapt in trance.

This wrong the God of Music scorned from such
a sottish judge,
And bent his angry bow at Pan, which made the
piper trudge :
The Midas' head he so did trim
That every age yet talks of him
And Phœbus' right revengèd judge.

Thomas Campion.

On a Lute found in a Sarcophagus

WHAT curled and scented sun-girls, almond-eyed,
With lotus blossoms in their hands and hair,
Have made their swarthy lovers call them fair,
With these spent strings, when brutes were deified,
And Memnon in the sunrise sprang and cried,
And love-winds smote Bubastis, and the bare
Black breasts of carven Pasht received the prayer
Of suppliants bearing gifts from far and wide!
This lute has outswung Egypt; all the lives
Of violent passion, and the vast calm art
That lasts in granite only, all lie dead;
This little bird of song alone survives,
As fresh as when its fluting smote the heart
Last time the brown slave wore it garlanded.

Edmund W. Gosse.

The Last Song of Orpheus

THAT silence ceased; and on the golden shore
The Thracian women, sanguine-handed, heard
Song from the River sweeter than the bird
That takes the night with rapture or, of yore,
Orpheus himself had sung. And more and more
It grew, and gathered to one lucent word,
So piteous-sweet, no pen could e'er record
Such honeyed sound as then began to soar.
The satyr pricked his goat-ears, wonderingly,
And dropped, atween his hoofs, his pipe of oat.
Bird, fish, and grove, move to the melody
For the last time. On Hebrus, far afloat,
The soul of Orpheus, in one dulcet note
Passed, as his dead lips sang, Eu-ry-dice.
Till listening mermaids i' the Ægean sea
Drew down the head, and sang with silver throat,
On rocks, and in sea caves, the self-same note
—Eu-ryd-i-ce! . . . Eu-ryd-i-ce!

Lloyd Mifflin.

On the Power of Sound

The Gift to king Amphion
That walled a city with its melody
Was for belief no dream :—thy skill, Arion !
Could humanise the creatures of the sea,
Where men were monsters. A last grace he craves,
Leave for one chant ;—the dulcet sound
Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,
And listening dolphins gather round.
Self-cast, as with a desperate course,
'Mid that strange audience, he bestrides
A proud One docile as a managed horse ;
And singing, while the accordant hand
Sweeps his harp, the Master rides ;
So shall he touch at length a friendly strand,
And he, with his preserver, shine star-bright
In memory, through silent night.

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds
Couched in the shadow of Mænalian pines,
Was passing sweet ; the eyeballs of the leopards,
That in high triumph drew the Lord of vines,
How did they sparkle to the cymbals' clang !

While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground
In cadence,—and Silenus swang
This way and that, with wild-flowers crowned,
To life, to *life* give back thine ear ;
Ye who are longing to be rid
Of fable, though to truth subservient, hear
The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell
Echoed from the coffin-lid ;
The convict's summons in the steeple's knell ;
" The vain distress gun," from a leeward shore,
Repeated—heard, and heard no more !

For terror, joy, or pity,
Vast is the compass and the swell of notes :
From the babe's first cry to voice of regal
city,
Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that floats
Far as the woodlands—with the trill to blend
Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale
Might tempt an angel to descend,
While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.
Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no scheme,
No scale of moral music—to unite
Powers that survive but in the faintest dream
Of memory ?—O that ye might stoop to bear
Chains, such precious chains of sight
As laboured minstrelsies through ages wear !
O for a balance fit the truth to tell
Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well !

By one pervading spirit
Of tones and numbers all things are controlled,
As sages taught, where faith was found to merit
Initiation in that mystery old.
The heavens, whose aspect makes our mind as still
As they themselves appear to be,
Innumerable voices fill
With everlasting harmony;
The towering headlands, crowned with mist,
Their feet among the billows, know
That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;
Thy pinions, universal Air,
Ever waving to and fro,
Are delegates of harmony, and bear
Strains that support the Seasons in their round;
Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

Break forth into thanksgiving,
Ye banded instruments of wind and chords,
Unite, to magnify the Ever-living,
Your inarticulate notes with the voice of words!
Nor hushed be service from the lowing mead,
Nor mute the forest hum of noon;
Thou too be heard, lone eagle! freed
From snowy peak and cloud, attune
Thy hungry barkings to the hymn
Of joy, that from her utmost walls
The six-days' Work, by flaming Seraphim

Transmits to Heaven! As Deep to Deep
Shouting through one valley calls,
All worlds, all natures, mood and measure keep
For praise and ceaseless gratulation, poured
Into the ear of God, their Lord!

A Voice to Light gave Being;
To Time, and Man his earth-born chronicler;
A Voice shall finish doubt and dim foreseeing,
And sweep away life's visionary stir;
The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,
Arm at its blast for deadly wars)
To archangelic lips applied,
The grave shall open, quench the stars.
O Silence! are Man's noisy years
No more than moments of thy life?
Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles and tears,
With her smooth tones and discords just,
Tempered into rapturous strife,
Thy destined bondslave? No! though earth
be dust
And vanish, though the heavens dissolve, her
stay
Is in the WORD, that shall not pass away.

William Wordsworth.

The Flute of Daphnis

I AM the flute of Daphnis. On this wall
He nailed his tribute to the great god Pan,
What time he grew from boyhood, shapely tall,
And felt the first deep ardours of a man.
Through adult veins more swift the song-tide ran—
A vernal stream whose swollen torrents call
For instant ease in utterance. Then began
That course of triumph reverenced by all.
Him the gods loved, and more than other men
Blessed with the flower of beauty, and endowed
His soul of music with the strength of ten.
Now on a festal day I see the crowd
Look fondly at my resting-place, and when
I think whose lips have pressed me, I am proud.

Edward Cracroft Lefroy.

Aspasia to Cleoric

WHEN Pericles is too grave and silent, I usually take up my harp and sing to it; for music is often acceptable to the ear when it would avoid or repose from discourse. He tells me that it not only excites the imagination, but invigorates eloquence and refreshes memory:

that playing on my harp to him is like besprinkling a tessellated pavement with odoriferous water, which brings out the images, cools the apartment, and gratifies the senses by its fragrance.

"That instrument," said he, "is the rod of Hermes; it calls up the spirits from below, or conducts them back again to Elysium. With what ecstasy do I throb and quiver under those refreshing showers of sound!"

Come sprinkle me soft music o'er the breast,
Bring me the varied colours into light
That now obscurely on its tablet rest,
Show me its flowers and figures fresh and bright.

Waked at thy voice and touch, again the chords
Restore what restless years had moved away,
Restore the glowing cheeks, the tender words,
Youth's short-lived spring and Pleasure's summer-day.

I believe he composed these verses while I was playing, although he disowns them, asking me whether I am willing to imagine that my execution is become so powerless.

You remember my old song: it was this I had been playing:

The reeds were green the other day,
Among the reeds we loved to play,
We loved to play while they were green.
The reeds are hard and yellow now,
No more their tufted heads they bow
To beckon us behind the scene.

"What is it like?" my mother said,
And laid her hand upon my head;
"Mother! I cannot tell indeed.
I've thought of all hard things I know,
I've thought of all the yellow too;
It only can be like the reed."

Panenos plays upon the harp. I praised him for the simplicity and melody of the tune, and for his execution. He was but little pleased.

"Lady," said he to me, "a painter can be two things; he can be painter and statuary, which is much the easier: make him a third, and you reduce him to nothing."

"Yet Pericles," said I, "plays rather well."

"*Rather well*, I can believe," said he, "because I know that his master was Damon, who was very skilful and very diligent. Damon, like every clever composer I have met with, or indeed ever heard of, was a child in levity and dissipation. His life was half feast, half concert."

"But, Panenos," said I, "surely we may be fond of music, and yet stand a little on this side of idiocy."

"Aspasia!" he replied, "he who loves not music is a beast of one species; he who overloves it is a beast of another, whose brain is smaller than a nightingale's, and his heart than a lizard's. Record me one memorable

saying, one witticism, one just remark, of any great musician, and I consent to undergo the punishment of Marsyas. Some among them are innocent and worthy men; not many, nor the first. Dissipation, and, what is strange, selfishness, and disregard to punctuality in engagements, are common and nearly general in the more distinguished of them.

"O Music! how it grieves me, that imprudence, intemperance, gluttony, should open their channels into thy sacred stream!"

Panenos said this: let us never believe a word of it. He himself plays admirably, although no composer.

Walter Savage Landor.

II

NATURE'S VOICES

There's music in the sighing of a reed;
There's music in the gushing of a rill;
There's music in all things, if men had ears:
Their earth is but an echo of the spheres.

Byron.

Spirit of Beauty . . .
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night-wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Orpheus

ORPHEUS with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
  Bow themselves when he did sing:
To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung: as sun and showers
  There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
  Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
Killing Care and Grief of Heart
  Fall asleep, or, hearing, die.

William Shakespeare ("Henry VIII").

Composed in Roslin Chapel during a Storm

THE wind is now thy organist; a clank
(We know not whence) ministers for a bell
To mark some change of service. As the swell
Of music reached its height, and even when sank
The notes, in prelude ROSLIN! to a blank
Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous roof,
Pillars, and arches,—not in vain time proof,
Though Christian rites be wanting! From what bank

Came those live herbs? by what hand were
they sown
Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem
unknown?
Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche
Share with their sculptured fellows, that, green-
grown,
Copy their beauty more and more, and preach,
Though mute, of all things blending into one.

William Wordsworth.

THERE the voluptuous nightingales
Are awake through all the broad noon-day,
When one with bliss or sadness fails,
And through the windless ivy-boughs
Sick with sweet love, droops dying away
On its mate's music-panting bosom;
Another from the swinging blossom,
Watching to catch the languid close
Of the last strain, then lifts on high
The wings of the weak melody,
Till some new strain of feeling bear
The song and all the woods are mute;
When there is heard through the dim air
The rush of wings, and rising there
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,
Sounds overflow the listener's brain
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Forest Music

All the nests with song are ringing,
  Forest music fills the land;
Who may be the concert-leader
  In the feathered woodland band?

Is it that grey Plover yonder,
  Who keeps nodding quick and strong?
Or the Pedant who, incessant,
  With his "cuckoo" tunes the song?

Or is it the Stork, that gravely
  Still keeps lapping with his bill,
Just as though he were conductor,
  While the rest their music trill?

No, in mine own heart is sitting
  The song-leader of the grove,
And I feel how he the time beats,
  And I think his name is—Love!

Heinrich Heine.

(Translated by J. Storrs Smith (John Ackerlos).)

Amphion

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree
And waster than a warren :
Yet say the neighbours when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion !
And had I lived when song was great
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber.

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation ;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down,
Coquetted with young beeches :
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little copses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle buzz ! she went
With all her bees behind her :
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers gallopaded.

Came wet-shot alder from the wave,
Came yews, a dismal coterie ;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree :
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And sweating rosin plumb'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
  When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
  The country-side descended ;
And shepherds from the mountain-eaves,
  Look'd down, half pleased, half frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
  The random sunshine lighten'd !

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
  And wanton without measure,
So youthful and so flexile then,
  You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle ! shake the twigs,
  And make her dance attendance ;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs
  And scirrhous roots and tendons.

'Tis vain ! in such a brassy age,
  I could not move a thistle ;
The very sparrows in the hedge
  Scarce answer to my whistle ;
Or at the most when three-parts sick
  With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass hee-haws from the rick
  The passive oxen gaping.

. . . . .

Lord Tennyson.

Song of the Birds

With what a hollow dirge its voice did fill
The vast and empty hollow of the night !—
It had perched itself upon a tall old tree,
That hung its tufted and thick clustering leaves
Midway across the brook ; and sung most sweetly,
In all the merry and heart-broken sadness
Of those that love hath crazed. Clearly it ran
Through all the delicate compass of its voice :—
And then again, as from a distant hollow,
I heard its sweet tones like an echo sounding,
And coming, like the memory of a friend
From a far-distant country—or the silent land
Of the mourned and the dead, to which we all are passing ;
It seemed the song of some poor broken heart,
Haunted for ever with love's cruel fancies !—
Of one that has loved much yet never known
The luxury of being loved again !

But when the morning broke, and the green woods
Were all alive with birds—with what a clear
And ravishing sweetness sung the plaintive thrush ;

I love to hear its delicate rich voice,
Chanting through all the gloomy day, when loud
Amid the trees is dropping the big rain,
And grey mists wrap the hills;—for aye the sweeter
Its song is, when the day is sad and dark. And thus,
When the bright fountains of a woman's love
Are gently running over, if a cloud
But darken, with its melancholy shadow,
The bright flowers round our way, her heart
Doth learn new sweetness, and her rich voice falls
With more delicious music on our ears.

H. W. Longfellow.

Strada's Nightingale

THE shepherd touch'd his reed; sweet Philomel
Essay'd and oft essay'd to catch the strain,
And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,
The numbers, echo'd note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before
A rival of his skill, indignant heard,
And soon (for various was his tuneful store)
In loftier tones defied the simple bird.

She dared the task, and, rising as he rose,
With all the force that passion gives inspired,
Return'd the sounds awhile, but in the close
Exhausted fell, and at his feet expired.

Thus strength not skill prevail'd. O fatal strife,
By thee, poor songstress, playfully begun ;
And O sad victory, which cost thy life,
And he may wish that he had never won !

William Cowper.

The Happy Bird

THE happy whitethroat on the swaying bough,
Rocked by the impulse of the gadding wind
That ushers in the showers of April, now
Carols right joyously ; and now reclined,
Crouching, she clings close to her moving seat,
To keep her hold ;—and till the wind for rest
Pauses, she utters inward melodies,
That seem her heart's rich thinkings to repeat.
But when the branch is still, her little breast
Swells out in rapture's gushing symphonies ;
And then, against her brown wing softly prest
The wind comes playing, an enraptured guest;
This way and that she swings—till gusts arise
More boisterous in their play, then off she flies.

John Clare.

Morning

WHAT tongue the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild-brook babbling down the mountain side,
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean tide;
The hum of bees, and linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crown'd with her pail, the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous wagon rings;
Thro' rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aërial tower.

James Beattie.

Music in the Night

And as I gazed upon the yew-tree's trunk,
Lo, far-off music—music in the night!
So sweet and tender as it swelled and sunk;
It charmed me till I wept with keen delight,
And in my dream, methought as it drew near
The very clouds in heaven stooped low to hear.
Beat high, beat low, wild heart so deeply stirred,
For high as heaven runs up the piercing strain;
The restless music fluttering like a bird
Bemoaned herself, and dropped to earth again,
Heaping up sweetness till I was afraid
That I should die of grief when it did fade.

Jean Ingelow.

The Queen of Souls

Musick, thou Queen of souls, get up and string
Thy pow'rfull Lute, and some sad requiem sing,
Till Rocks requite thy Eccho with a groan:
And the dull clifts repeat the duller tone:
Then on a sudden with a nimble hand
Run gently o'er the Chordes, and so command

The Pine to dance, the Oak his Roots forgo,
The Holme,* and aged Elme to foot it too ;
Mirtles shall caper, lofty Cedars run,
And call the Courtly Palme to make up one ;
Then in the midst of all their jolly train
Strike a sad note ; and fix 'em Trees again.

Thomas Randolph.

A Lyric

THOUGH now 'tis neither May nor June,
And nightingales are out of tune,
Yet in these leaves, fair One, there lies
(Sworn servant to your sweetest eyes)
A nightingale, who, may she spread
In your white bosom her chaste bed,
Spite of all the maiden snow
Those pure untrodden paths can show,
You straight shall see her wake and rise,
Taking fresh life from your fair eyes,
And with claspt wings proclaim a spring,
Where Love and she shall sit and sing :
For lodged so near your sweetest throat
What nightingale can lose her note ?
Nor let her kindred birds complain
Because she breaks the year's old reign ;
For let them know she's none of those

* Holly.

Hedge-quiristers whose music owes
Only such strains as serve to keep
Sad shades, and sing dull night asleep.
No, she's a priestess of that grove,
The holy chapel of chaste love,
Your virgin bosom. Then whate'er
Poor laws divide the public year,
Whose revolutions wait upon
The wild turns of the wanton sun,
Be you the Lady of Love's year,
Where your eyes shine his suns appear.
There all the year in Love's long Spring,
There all the year
Love's nightingales shall sit and sing.

Richard Crashaw.

Sea Music

GREY night broods above the ocean,
Little stars gleam sparkling o'er us;
And the water's many voices
Chant in deep protracted chorus.

Hark! the old North wind is playing
On the polished waves of ocean,
That, like tubes of some great organ,
Thrill and stir with sounding motion.

Partly pagan, partly sacred,
  Rise these melodies upswelling
Passionately to the heavens
  Where the joyous stars are dwelling.

And the stars wax large and larger,
  In bright mazes they are driven
Large as suns at last revolving
  Through the spaces of vast heaven.

And weird harmonies they warble,
  With the billows' music blending ;
Solar nightingales, they circle
  Through the spheres strange concord sending.

And with mighty roar and trembling,
  Sky and ocean both are ringing ;
And a giant's stormy rapture
  Feel I in my bosom springing.

Heinrich Heine.

(Translated by Emma Lazarus.)

To a Skylark

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit !
  Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
  Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
From the cloud thou springest
Like a cloud of fire ;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

. . . . .

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower ;

. . . . .

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

. . . . .

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

P. B. Shelley.

III

ECHOES

Sweet as stops
Of planetary music heard in trance.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Hist! when the airy stress
Of music's kiss impregnates the free winds,
And with a sympathetic touch unbinds
Æolian magic from their lucid wombs:
Then old songs waken from enclouded tombs;
Old ditties sigh above their father's grave;
Ghosts of melodious prophesyings rave
Round every spot where trod Apollo's foot;
Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,
Where long ago a giant battle was;
And, from the turf, a lullaby doth pass
In every place where infant Orpheus slept.

John Keats.

A Ballade of Forgotten Tunes

TO V. L.

FORGOTTEN seers of lost repute
That haunt the banks of Acheron,
Where have you dropped the broken lute
You played in Troy or Calydon?
O ye that sang in Babylon
By foreign willows cold and grey,
Fall'n are the harps ye hanged thereon,
Dead are the tunes of yesterday!

De Coucy, is your music mute,
The quaint old plain-chant woe-begone
That served so many a lover's suit?
Oh, dead as Adam or Guédron!
Then, sweet De Caurroy, try upon
Your virginals a virelay;
Or play Orlando, one pavonne—
Dead are the tunes of yesterday!

But ye whose praises none refute,
Who have the immortal laurel won;
Trill me your quivering close acute,
Astorga, dear unhappy Don!

One air, Galuppi! Sarti one
So many fingers used to play!—
Dead as the ladies of Villon,
Dead are the tunes of yesterday!

Envoy.

Vernon, in vain you stooped to con
The slender, faded notes to-day—
The Soul that dwelt in them is gone:
Dead are the tunes of yesterday!

A. Mary F. Robinson (Mme. Duclaux).

"Over the Hills and Far Away"

LAST night, last night, in the dark o' the moon
Into my dreams slid a faery tune
It slew the dreams that I dreamed of him,
With its moonshine music, faint and dim.
What tune should the faery pipers play
But "Over the Hills and Far Away"?

The music called to my idle feet,
And O! the music was wild and sweet:
I left my dreams and my lonely bed,
And followed afar where the music led,
And never a tune did the pipers play
But "Over the Hills and Far Away."

Over the hills and far away,
What love has tenderer words to say?
Love that lifteth or boweth the head,
Love that liveth or love that is dead?
Hills that are far away are fair,
And I followed the ghost of my lover there.

We danced all night in a silent band,
I and my lover hand in hand:
We danced, nor knew till the dew was dry
That deep slept Donat and lone slept I.
We took no thought of the coming day
Over the hills and far away.

My eyes are blind with the growing light,
And O my grief, that the day was night!
For my heart is broke, for my lover's eyes,
And all day long in my ears there cries
The tune of the faery pipes that play
"Over the Hills and Far Away."

Nora Chesson.

To ——

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Music's Voice

PORTIA. Let music sound while he doth make
his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the
stream,
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch; such it is

As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage.

William Shakespeare ("Merchant of Venice").

To a Lost Melody

THOU art not dead, O sweet lost melody,
Sung beyond memory,
When golden to the winds this world of ours
Waved wild with boundless flowers;
Sung in some past when wildernesses were,—
Not dead, not dead, lost air!
Yet in the ages long where lurkest thou,
And what soul knows thee now?
Wert thou not given to sweeten every wind
From that o'er-burdened mind
That bore thee through the young world, and that tongue
By which thou first wert sung?
Was not thy holy choir the endless dome,
And nature all thy home?
Did not the warm gale clasp thee to his breast,
Lulling thy storms to rest?
And is the June air laden with these now,
Passing the summer bough?
And is the dawn-wind on a lonely sea
Balmy with thoughts of thee?

To rock on daybreak winds dost thou rejoice,
As first on his strong voice
Whose radiant morning soul did give thee birth,
Gave thee to heaven and earth ?
Or did each bird win one dear note of thee
To pipe eternally ?
Art thou the secret of the small field-flowers
Nodding thy time for hours,
—Blown by the happy winds from hill to hill,
And such a secret still ?
Or wert thou rapt awhile to other spheres
To gladden tenderer ears ?
Doth music's soul contain thee, precious air,
Sleepest thou clasped there,
Until a time shall come for thee to start
Into some unborn heart ?
Then wilt thou as the clouds of ages roll,
Thou migratory soul,
Amid a different, wilder wilderness
—In crowds that throng and press,
Revive thy blessed cadences forgotten
In some soul new-begotten ?
Oh, wilt thou ever tire of thy long rest
On nature's silent breast ?
And wilt thou leave thy rainbow showers, to bear
A part in human care ?
—Forsake thy boundless silence to make choice
Of some pathetic voice ?

—Forsake thy stars, thy suns, thy moons, thy skies
For man's desiring sighs ?

Alice Meynell.

Music Unheard

SWEET sounds, begone—
Whose music on my ear
Stirs foolish discontent
Of lingering here ;
When, if I crossed
The crystal verge of death,
Him I should see
Who these sounds murmureth.

Sweet sounds, begone—
Ask not my heart to break
Its bond of bravery
For sweet quiet's sake ;
Lure not my feet
To leave the path they must
Tread on, unfalteringly,
Till I sleep in dust.

Sweet sounds, begone—
Tho' silence brings apace
Deadly disquiet
Of this homeless place ;

And all I love
In beauty cries to me,
" We but vain shadows
And reflections be."

Walter de la Mare.

When the Lamp is Shattered

When the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered
The rainbow's glory is shed;
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled

To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

WHILE thus I stood in mazes bound
Of vernal sorcery,
I heard a dainty dubious sound,
As of goodly melody;
Which first was faint as if in swound,
Then burst so suddenly
In warring concord all around,
That, whence this thing might be,
To see
The very marrow longed in me!
It seemed of air, it seemed of ground,
And never any witchery
Drawn from pipe or reed or string,

Made such dulcet ravishing.
'Twas like no earthly instrument,
Yet had something of them all
In its rise, and in its fall ;
As if in one sweet consort there were blent
These archetypes celestial
Which our endeavouring instruments recall.

Francis Thompson.

Clovelly Beach

Oh, music ! breathe me something old to-day,
Some fine air gliding in from far away,
Through to the soul that lies behind the clay.

This hour, if thou didst ever speak before,
Speak in the wave that sobs upon the shore,
Speak in the rill that trickles from the moor.

Known was this sea's slow chant when I was young ;
To me these rivulets sing as once they sung,
No need this hour of human throat and tongue.

The Dead who loved me heard this selfsame tide.
Oh that the Dead were listening by my side,
And I could give the fondness then denied.

Once in the parlour of my mother's sire
One sang, "And ye shall walk in silk attire."
Then my cold childhood woke to strange desire.

That was an unconfessed and idle spell,
A drop of dew that on a blossom fell;
And what it wrought I cannot surely tell.

Far off that thought and changed, like lines
that stay
On withered canvas, pink and pearly grey,
When rose and violet hues have passed away.

Oh, had I dwelt with music since that night,
What life but that is life, what other flight
Escapes the plaguing doubts of wrong and right!

Oh, music! once I felt the touch of thee,
Once when this soul was as the chainless sea.
Oh, couldst thou bid me even now be free.

William Cory.

Sweet Music

Ah, Music! it doth sound more sweet
Than rain on crispèd leaves; or when
Beauty doth stroke a kitten rose,
And screams, to feel her fingers then
Scratched by its little claws.

Drowned, Music, in thy waves, I saw
My whole long Past before me go ;
Now rouse me with a merry shout—
Such as charm children, when winds blow
The light they love clean out.

Laugh thee, sweet Music, like those girls,
When each was fit but none were wed ;
As they did banter a shy boy,
Who could not raise on high his head
And face their wicked joy.

William H. Davies.

The Spirit of Place

With mimicry, with praises, with echoes, or with answers, the poets have all but outsung the bells. The inarticulate bell has found too much interpretation, too many rhymes professing to close with her inaccessible utterance, and to agree with her remote tongue. The bell, like the bird, is a musician pestered with literature.

To the bell, moreover, men do actual violence. You cannot shake together a nightingale's notes, or strike or drive them into haste, nor can you make a lark toll for you with intervals to suit your turn, whereas wedding-bells are

compelled to seem gay by mere movement and hustling. I have known some grim bells, with not a single joyous note in the whole peal, so forced to hurry for a human festival, with their harshness made light of, as though the Bishop of Hereford had again been forced to dance in his boots by a merry highwayman.

The clock is an inexorable, but less arbitrary player than the bell-ringer, and the chimes await their appointed time to fly—wild prisoners—by twos or threes, or in greater companies. Fugitives—one or twelve taking wing—they are sudden, they are brief, they are gone; they are delivered from the close hands of this actual present. Not in vain is the sudden upper door opened against the sky; they are away, hours of the past.

Of all unfamiliar bells, those which seem to hold the memory most surely after but one hearing are bells of an unseen cathedral of France when one has arrived by night; they are no more to be forgotten than the bells in "Parsifal." They tingle with the sound of feet in unknown streets; they are the voices of an unknown tower; they are loud in their own language. The spirit of place, which is to be seen in the shapes of the fields and the manner of the crops, to be felt in a prevalent wind, breathed in the breath of the earth,

overheard in a far street-cry, or in the tinkle of some blacksmith, calls out and peals in the cathedral bells. It speaks its local tongue remotely, stedfastly, largely, clamorously, loudly and greatly by these voices ; you hear the sound in its dignity, and you know how familiar, how childlike, how lifelong, it is in the ears of the people. The bells are strange, and you know how homely they must be. Their utterances are, as it were, the classics of a dialect.

. . . . .

If, especially in England, we make rough and reluctant bells go in gay measures, when we whip them to run down the scale to ring in a wedding—bells that would step to quite another and a less agile march with a better grace—there are belfries that hold far sweeter companies. If there is no music within Italian churches, there is a most curious local immemorial music in many a campanile on the heights. Their way is for the ringers to play a tune on the festivals, and the tunes are not hymn tunes or popular melodies, but proper bell-tunes, made for bells. Doubtless they were made in times better versed than ours in the subdivisions of the arts, and better able to understand the strength that lies ready in the mere little submission to the means of a little art, and to the limits—nay, the very embarrassments—

of those means. If it were but possible to give here a real bell-tune—which cannot be, for those melodies are rather long—the reader would understand how some village musician of the past used his narrow means as a composer for the bells, with what freshness, completeness, significance, fancy, and what effect of liberty.

These hamlet-bells are the sweetest, as to their own voices, in the world. When I speak of their antiquity I use the word relatively. The belfries are no older than the sixteenth or seventeenth century, the time when Italy seems to have been generally rebuilt. But, needless to say, this is antiquity for music, especially in Italy. At that time they must have had foundries for bells of tender voices, and pure, warm, light, and golden throats, precisely tuned. The hounds of Theseus had not a more just scale tuned in a peal than a North Italian belfry holds in leash. But it does not send them out in a mere scale, it touches them in the order of the game of a charming melody. Of all cheerful sounds made by man this is by far the most light-hearted. You do not hear it from the great churches. Giotto's coloured tower in Florence, that carries the bells for Santa Maria del Fiore and Brunelleschi's silent dome, does not ring more than four con-

tralto notes, tuned with sweetness, depth, and dignity, and swinging one musical phrase which softly fills the country.

The village belfry it is that grows so fantastic and has such nimble bells. Obviously it stands alone with its own village, and can therefore hear its own tune from beginning to end. There are no other bells in earshot. Other such dove-cote doors are suddenly set open to the cloud, on a *festa* morning, to let fly those soft-voiced flocks, but the nearest is behind one of many mountains, and our local tune is uninterrupted. Doubtless this is why the little secluded, sequestered art of composing melodies for bells—charming division of an art, having its own ends and means, and keeping its own wings for unfolding by law—dwells in these solitary places. No tunes in a town would get this hearing, or would be made clear to the end of their frolic amid such a wide and lofty silence.

Nor does every inner village of Italy hold a bell-tune of its own ; the custom is Ligurian. Nowhere so much as in Genoa does the nervous tourist complain of church bells in the morning, and in fact he is made to hear an honest rout of them betimes. But the nervous tourist has not, perhaps, the sense of place, and the genius of place does not signal to him to go

and find it among innumerable hills, where one by one, one by one, the belfries stand and play their tunes. Variable are those lonely melodies, having a differing gaiety for the festivals; and a pitiful air is played for the burial of a villager.

As for the poets, there is but one among so many of their bells that seems to toll with a spiritual music as loud as to be unforgotten when the mind goes up a little higher than the earth, to listen in thought to earth's untethered sounds. This is Milton's curfew, that sways across one of the greatest of all the seashores of poetry—" the wide-watered."

Alice Meynell.

Music

I PANT for the music which is divine,
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,
Loosen the notes in a silver shower;
Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,
More, oh more,—I am thirsting yet;

It loosens the serpent which care has bound
  Upon my heart to stifle it ;
The dissolving strain, through every vein,
Passes into my heart and brain.

As the scent of a violet withered up,
  Which grew by the brink of a silver lake,
When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup,
  And mist there was none its thirst to slake—
And the violet lay dead while the odour flew
On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue.

As one who drinks from a charmèd cup
  Of foaming, and sparkling, and murmuring wine ;
Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,
  Invites to love with her kiss divine. . . .

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

The Angelus

Heard at the Mission Dolores, 1868

BELLS of the Past, whose long-forgotten music
  Still fills the wide expanse,
Tingeing the sober twilight of the Present
  With colour of romance :

I hear your call, and see the sun descending
On rock and wave and sand,
As down the coast the Mission voices blending
Girdle the heathen land.

Within the circle of your incantation
No blight nor mildew falls;
Nor fierce unrest, nor lust, nor low ambition
Passes those airy walls.

Borne on the swell of your long waves receding,
I touch the farther Past,—
I see the dying glow of Spanish glory,
The sunset dream and last!

Before me rise the dome-shaped Mission towers,
The white Presidio;
The swart commander in his leathern jerkin,
The priest in stole of snow.

Once more I see Portala's cross uplifting
Above the setting sun;
And past the headland, northward, slowly drifting
The freighted galleon.

O solemn bells! whose consecrated masses
Recall the faith of old,—
O tinkling bells! that lulled with twilight music
The spiritual fold!

Your voices break and falter in the darkness,—
Break, falter and are still;
And veiled and mystic, like the Host descending,
The sun sinks from the hill!

Bret Harte.

The Songs of Myrtis

SEND me the lyre again,
The long forsaken!
One tone it must retain,
One song of all the store
I gave to it of yore
Sleeps there to waken.

Wreathe me the lyre again!
Moonflowers and sorrel
Gather by stream and plain,
Weaving a thousand flowers
Under the wild-rose bowers,
But not the laurel.

Give me the lyre again!
As Heaven that sent it
Sucks from the earth her rain,
So from the trembling lyre
My soul shall drink the fire
That once she lent it.

Margaret L. Woods.

IV

PIPE AND LUTE

HAMLET. . . . Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN. My lord, I cannot

HAM. I pray you.

GUIL. Believe me I cannot.

HAM. I do beseech you.

GUIL. I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAM. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

GUIL. But there, I cannot command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

HAM. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. Do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call you what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

William Shakespeare ("Hamlet").

The Piper

Piping down the valleys wild,
  Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
  And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a lamb."
  So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again";
  So I piped; he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,
  Sing thy songs of happy cheer":
So I sang the same again,
  While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
  In a book that all may read—"
So he vanished from my sight;
  And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
  And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs,
  Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake.

A DAMSEL with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread:
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drank the milk of Paradise.

S. T. Coleridge.

To my Lyre

SLEEP,—sleep, my Lyre!
Untouch'd,—unsought,—unstrung!
No one now will e'er enquire
If poet to thee ever sung;
Nor if his spirit clung

To thy witching wire !—
Bid thy soul of music sleep,
As winds lie on the charmed deep,
When the mistress Moon doth chide
The tempest, or the murmuring tide !
'Tis well to be a thing forgot !
Oblivion is a happy lot !
'Tis well that neither Love, nor Woe,
Nor sad sweet thoughts of " long ago,"
Should 'waken again thy self-consuming fire !
Therefore, therefore,—sleep my Lyre !

Barry Cornwall.

Upon a Gentleman Playing on the Lute

STRANGE miracle ! Who's this that wears
The native Liv'rie of the Sphears ;
Transforming all our sense to Ears ?

Surely it cannot bee a sin
To think there is, or may have bin
On Earth a heavenly Seraphin.

That granted, certain it must bee hee,
In any else there cannot bee,
Such a Cœlestiall Harmonie.

When glorious He with swift pursute
Touch'd the soft Cordage of his Lute,
The Genius of the World was mute.

Amphion so his hand let fall,
When at th' inchantment of his call
Stones danc'd to build the *Theban* wall.

Arion sure, when he began
To charme th' attentive Ocean,
Was but an Embleme of this Man,

Whose numerous Fingers, whiter farre
Than *Venus* Swans or *Ermines* are,
Wag'd with the amorous strings a Warre ;

But such a Warre as did invite
The sense of Hearing, and the Sight
To riot in a full delight.

For as his Touch kept equal pace,
His looks did move with such a grace ;
We read his Music in his Face.

Live Noble Youth, let Heav'n inspire
Thee with its owne eternall Fire,
While all that hear thee doe admire.

Henry Glapthorne.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin was a pity.

Rats!
They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think that we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

An hour they sat in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again
I've scratched it so, and all in vain,
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?"

(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat ;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister,
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous),
" Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat ! "
" Come in ! "—the Mayor cried, looking
bigger :
And in did come the strangest figure.

His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red ;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin !
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one : " It's as my great grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tomb-
stone."

He advanced to the council-table :

And, " Please, your honours," said he, " I'm
able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole, and toad, and newt, and viper ;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the selfsame cheque ;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
" Yet," said he, " poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats ;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampire bats :
And, as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders ? "
" One ? fifty thousand ! "—was the exclama-
tion
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

Into the street the Piper stept,
  Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
  In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty
    rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny
    rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
  Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
  Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step by step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished!
—Save one, who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry

(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was, " At the first shrill notes of the
pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe ;
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks ;
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, Oh, rats ! rejoice !
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
To munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon !
And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, Come, bore me !
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
" Go," cried the Mayor, " and get long poles !
Poke out the nests and block up the holes !
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace

Of the rats ! "—when suddenly up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, " First, if you please, my thousand guilders ! "

A thousand guilders ! The Mayor looked blue ;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock ;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow !
" Beside," quoth the Mayor, with a knowing wink,
" Our business was done at the river's brink ;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something to drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke ;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Besides, our losses have made us thrifty ;
A thousand guilders ! Come, take fifty ! "

The piper's face fell, and he cried,
" No trifling ! I can't wait, beside !

I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdad, and accepted the prime
Of the Head Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor—
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion."

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I'll
brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

Once more he stept into the street;
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musicians cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling, at pitching and
hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes
clattering,

Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farmyard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.
The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"

When lo ! as they reached the mountain's side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed ;
And the Piper advanced, and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all ? No ! one was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way ;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say :
" It's dull in our town since my playmates left ;
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me ;
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new ;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings ;
And horses were born with eagles' wings ;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped, and I stood still,

And found myself outside the Hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!"

Alas, alas for Hamelin!
  There came into many a burgher's pate
  A text which says, that Heaven's Gate
  Opes to the Rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in!

The Mayor sent East, West, North and South,
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,
  Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
  And bring the children all behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
  Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
  "And so long after what happened here
  On the twenty-second of July,
  Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:"
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the Children's last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper's street—

Where any one playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away ;
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress,
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison,
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why they don't understand.

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers ;
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise.

R. Browning.

Bugle Song

THE splendour falls on castle walls,
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Lord Tennyson.

The Mandolin

Tinkle-trink, tinkle-trink, trinkle-trinkle, trink !
Hark, the mandolin !
Through the dusk the merry music falleth sweet.
Where the fountain falls,
Where the fountain falls all shimmering in the moonshine white,
Tinkle-trink, tinkle-trink, trinkle-trinkle, trink !
Where the wind-stirred olives quiver,
Quiver, quiver, leaves a-quiver,
White as silver in the moonlight but like bat-wings in the dusk,
Where the great grey moths sail slowly,
Slowly, slowly, like faint dreams
In the wildering woods of Sleep,
Where no night or day is,
But only, in dim twilights, the wan sheen
Of the Moon of Sleep.

Hark, the mandolin !
Where the dark-coned cypress rises,
Thin, more thin, till threadlike, wavering
The last spray soars up as smoke,
As a vanishing breath of incense
To the silent stars that glimmer

In the veil of purple darkness,
The deep vault of heaven that seemeth
As a veil that falleth,
A dark veil that foldeth gently
The tired day-worn world, breathing stilly as a sleeping child.
Hark, the mandolin :
And a soft low sound of laughter !
Tinkle-trink, tinkle-trink, trinkle-trinkle, trink !

Hush : from out the cypress standing
Black against the yellow moonlight
What a thrill, what a sob, what a sudden rapture flung
Athwart the dark !
Passion of song !
Silence again, save mid the whispering leaves
The unquiet wind, that as the tide
Cometh and goeth.
Now one long thrilling note, prolonged and sweet,
And then a low swift stir,
A whirr of fluttering wings,
And in the laurels near, two nested nightingales !
Loud, loud, the mandolin,
Tinkle-trink, tinkle-trink, trinkle-trinkle, trink,
Trink, trink, trinkle-trink !
Through the fragrant silent night it draweth near,

Ah, the low cry, the little laugh, the rustle :
Tinkle-trink—hush, a kiss—*tinkle-trink*—hush
—hush—
Tinkle-trink, tinkle-trink, trinkle-trinkle, trink !
Where the shadows massed together
Make a hollow darkness, girt
By the yellow flood of moonshine floating by,
Where the groves of ilex whisper
In the silence, fragrant, sweet,
Where the ilexes are dreaming
In their depths of darkest shadow,
Move the fireflies slowly,
Mazile, inweaving,
Interweaving, interflowing ;
Wandering fires, like little lanterns
Borne by souls of birds and flowers,
Seeking ever resurrection
In the gladsome world of sunshine ;
Seeking vainly through the darkness
In beneath the ilex-branches
Where the very moonshine faileth,
And the dark grey moths wave wanly
Flitting from the outer gloaming,
Oh, the fragrance, and the mystery, and the
silence !
Where the fireflies, 'mid the ilex,
Rise and fall, recross, inweave
In an endless wavy motion,
In a slow aerial dancing

In a maze of little flames
In and out the ilex-branches:
Hush! the mandolin!
Louder still and louder, louder:
Ah, the happy laugh, and rustle,
Rustle, rustle,
Ah the kiss, the cry, the rapture.
Silence, where the ilex branches
Loom out faintly from their darkness
Where, slow-wandering flames, the fireflies
Rise and fall, recross, inweave
In an endless wavy motion,
In a slow aerial dancing.

Silence: not a breath is stirring:
Not a leaflet quivers faintly.
Silence: even the bats are silent
Wheeling swiftly through the upper air,
Where the gnat's thin shrilling music
Fades into the flooding moonlight:
Hush, low whispered words and kisses,
Hush, a cry of pain, of rapture.
Not a sound, a sound thereafter,
But a low sweet sigh of breathing,
And, from out the flowering laurel,
Just a twittering breath of music,
Just a long-drawn pulsing note
Of a sweet and passionate answer.
Silence: hark, a stir—low laughter—

Whispered words—and rustle—rustle—
Trink—trink—the mandolin!
Hark it trinkles down the valley,
Trink-trink, trinkle-trink, trinkle-trink!
Past the cistus, blooming whitely,
Past the oleander bushes,
Past the ilexes and olives,
Where the two tall pines are whispering
With the sleepy wind that foldeth
His tired pinions ere he sleepeth
On the flood of amber moonlight.
Wind o' the night, tired wind o' night—
Tinkle-trink, trink, trinkle-trink,
Trink, trinkle-trink,
Trink!

William Sharp.

Good Night

Good night, Good night, my Lyre!
A long, a last Good night!
In ashes lies the fire
That lent me Warmth and Light.

With Love, Life too is fled;
My bosom's blood is cold;
My mind is all but dead;
My heart is growing old.

Soon will my sad eyes close,
O Lyre, on Earth and Thee!
I go to woo Repose
In God's Eternity.

James Clarence Mangan, after *Wetzel*.

The Song of the Lute-Player

STILL as a star came to my breast
A joy unbidden,
Not to be known, not to be guessed,
So fair, so hidden;
And now within 'tis like the starry night,
The unimagined pure ethereal height,
Trembling in loneliness at its own light.

Heaven of my joy, fair though thou art,
A light for ever,
Yet there's a grief hid in my heart
Like the great river.
At times a little while it seems to sleep,
And then a voice cries to it from the deep,
And all its floods over my spirit sweep.

Hast thou a joy? Though but a flower,
O maiden, bring it.
Though but a dream of morning hour,
Yet will I sing it.

And as a bird that calls its mate my strain
—Listen, the lute begins like falling rain—
Shall call the Spring and Spring return again.

Hast thou a fear hid in thy heart,
A sorrow sleeping ?
Light though it be, soon to depart,
I'll sing it weeping.
The ruined shrines shall answer as I sing,
In hollow tombs of many an ancient king
Forgotten woes shall waken murmuring.

Then in my song, maiden, I'll weave
The world's emotion,
Passion of souls that laugh and grieve,
And Earth and Ocean.
The silver spheres shall hush awhile their quire,
Saying, " Return, lost star of our desire,
Send us again thy music and thy fire."

Only my joy, only my pain
May not be spoken.
These would I tell, earthward again
The song drops broken.
Sleeping I dream my joy, my sorrow sing.
I wake—the lonely night is listening
To one long sigh, breathed from a shattered string.

Margaret L. Woods.

V

THE FOOD OF LOVE

CLEOPATRA. Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

William Shakespeare (" Antony and Cleopatra ").

SOFT MUSICK

The Mellow touch of musick most doth wound
The soule, when it doth rather sigh, than sound.

Robert Herrick.

How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears!

William Shakespeare (" Romeo and Juliet ").

The Food of Love

[ENTER *Musician.*

DUKE. If music be the food of Love, play on :
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again ! it had a dying fall :
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour ! Enough ; no more.

. . . . .

DUKE. How dost thou like this tune ?
VIOLA. It gives a very echo to the seat
Where love is throned.

William Shakespeare (" Twelfth Night ").

A Serenade at the Villa

THAT was I, you heard last night
When there rose no moon at all,
Nor, to pierce the strained and tight
Tent of heaven, a planet small :
Life was dead, and so was light.

Not a twinkle from the fly,
Not a glimmer from the worm.
When the crickets stopped their cry,
When the owls forbore a term,
You heard music ; that was I.

Earth turned in her sleep with pain,
Sultrily suspired for proof:
In at heaven and out again,
Lightning!—where it broke the roof,
Blood-like, some few drops of rain.

What they could my words expressed,
O my love, my all, my one!
Singing helped the verses best,
And when singing's best was done,
To my lute I left the rest.

. . . . .

Robert Browning.

The Lover to His Lyre

AWAKE, awake, my Lyre,
And tell thy silent master's humble tale
In sounds that may prevail,—
Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire:
Though so exalted she
And I so lowly be,
Tell her such different notes make all thy harmony.

Hark! how the strings awake;
And though the moving hand approach not near,

Themselves with awful fear
A kind of numerous trembling make.
Now all thy forces try
Now all thy charms apply:
Revenge upon her ear the conquests of her eye!

Weak Lyre! thy virtue sure
Is useless here, since thou art only found
To cure, but not to wound—
And she to wound, but not to cure.
Too weak too wilt thou prove,
My passion to remove:
Physic to other ills, thou'rt nourishment to love.

Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre!
For thou canst never tell my humble tale
In sounds that will prevail,
Nor gentle thoughts in her inspire.
All thy vain mirth lay by,
Bid thy strings silent lie:
Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre, and let thy master die!

Abraham Cowley.

LORENZO. How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
[*Enter* MUSICIANS.
Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress's ear
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

JESSICA. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LORENZO. The reason is your spirits are attentive;
For do but note a wild and wanton herd
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
Or if they hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music; therefore the poet

Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and
floods ;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils :
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus :
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

William Shakespeare
(" Merchant of Venice ").

Two Making Music

THESE are her songs : tho' his voice lifted be,
And his hand wrote the words and set the key,
She listening, is voiced in what she hears :
Here are her very form and melody
Now rendered back to her beloved ears.

She plays on him as on an instrument,
And all his notes, resounding to her touch,
Do give her forth into the twilight room.
Here is her voice : it soundeth but of her ;
Here are her words : they tell of her alone ;
And here her penmanship : she guides his
hand ;

Here are her face and presence : he sees naught
But her in all the world, and he is naught
But, as it were, a harp set quivering
By memories of her that pass and pass
Like little winds fretting the sounding string
Stretched in dim arbours o'er the twilight grass.

These are her songs : it is not he doth sing,
But she herself hymning herself. Alas !
Here we have perfect beauty mirroring
Itself in a cracked glass.

Ford Madox Hueffer.

To Jane

THE keen stars were twinkling
And the fair moon was rising among them,
Dear Jane !
The guitar was tinkling
But the notes were not sweet till you sung them
Again.

As the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of Heaven
Is thrown,
So your voice most tender
To the strings without soul had then given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later
To-night;
No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Stanzas for Music

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmèd ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;

Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Lord Byron.

Nights of Music

NIGHTS of music, nights of loving,
Lost too soon, remembered long,
When we met by moonlight roving,
Hearts all love and lips all song.
When this faithful lute recorded
All my spirit felt to thee,
And that smile the song rewarded,
Worth whole years of fame to me.

Nights of song and nights of splendour,
Filled with joys too sweet to last—
Joys that, like yon star-light tender,
While they shone no shadow cast;
Though all other happy hours
From my fading memory fly,
Of that star-light, of those bowers,
Not a beam, a leaf, shall die.

Thomas Moore.

Music

WHEN lovely sounds about my ears
  Like winds in Eden's tree-tops rise
And make me, though my spirit hears,
  For very luxury close my eyes:
Let none but friends be round about,
  Who love the soothing joy like me,
That so the charm be felt throughout,
  And all be harmony.

And when we reach the close divine,
  Then let the hand of her I love
Come with its gentle palm on mine,
  As soft as snow, or lighting dove;
And let, by stealth, that more than friend
  Look sweetness in my opening eyes;
For only so such dreams should end,
  Or wake in Paradise.

Leigh Hunt.

Sonnet

MY lute, be as thou wert when thou didst grow
With thy green mother in some shady grove,
When immelodious winds but made thee move,
And birds their ramage did on thee bestow.

Since that dear voice which did thy sounds approve,
Which wont in such harmonious strains to flow,
Is reft from Earth to tune those spheres above,
What art thou but a harbinger of woe ?

Thy pleasing notes be pleasing notes no more,
But orphans' wailings to the fainting ear ;
Each stroke a sigh, each sound draws forth a tear ;
For which be silent as in woods before :

Or if that any hand to touch thee deign,
Like widow'd turtle still her loss complain.

William Drummond.

The Musical Strife

A Pastoral Dialogue

SHE. Come, with our voices, let us war
And challenge all the spheres,
Till each of us be made a star,
And all the world turn ears.

HE. At such a call, what beast or fowl
Of reason empty is ?
What tree or stone doth want a soul ?
What man but must lose his ?

SHE. Mix then your notes, that we may prove
To stay the running floods,
To make the mountain quarries move,
And call the waking woods!

HE. What need of me? do you but sing,
Sleep and the grave will wake;
No tunes are sweet, nor words have sting,
But what those lips do make!

SHE. They say the angels mark each deed
And exercise below,
And out of inward pleasure feed
On what they viewing know.

HE. O sing not you then, lest the best
Of angels should be driven
To fall again, at such a feast,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

SHE. Nay! rather both our souls be strained
To meet their high desire:
So they, in state of grace retained,
May wish us of their quire.

Ben Jonson.

Choric Song

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.

Lord Tennyson.

Song

WHEN the Balaika
Is heard o'er the sea,
I'll dance the Romaika
By moonlight with thee.
If waves, then, advancing,
Should steal on our play,
Thy white feet in dancing,
Shall chase them away.
When the Balaika
Is heard o'er the sea,
Thou'lt dance the Romaika,
My own love, with me.

Then, at the closing
  Of each merry lay,
We'll lie reposing
  Beneath the night ray!
Or, if, declining
  The moon leave the skies,
We'll talk by the shining
  Of each other's eyes.

Oh, then, how featly
  The dance we'll renew,
Wandering fleetly
  Its light mazes through!
Till stars shining o'er us
  From heaven's high bow'rs
Would give their bright chorus
  For one dance of ours!
When the Balaika
  Is heard o'er the sea
Thou'lt dance the Romaika,
  My own love, with me.

Thomas Moore.

VI

FIDDLE-STRINGS

A FIDDLER

All day long about the town,
He had wandered up and down
From street to street, from drink to drink;
At evening he began to think,
" Better, far better, to be dead
Where no thought could find out my head;
Lying in some green place apart
No sorrow could find out my heart;
Laid in the quiet there alone
I should have all my dreams my own;
For, though they know not, when I play
(These fools) I give my dreams away."

Seumas O'Sullivan.

The Violin

"WHAT is that?" said the Angel, following him. "A violin!" He took it down.

"You play?" said the Vicar.

The Angel had the bow in his hand, and by way of answer drove it across the strings. The quality of the note made the Vicar turn suddenly.

The Angel's hand tightened on the instrument. The bow flew back and flickered, and an air the Vicar had never heard before danced in his ears. The Angel shifted the fiddle under his dainty chin and went on playing, and as he played his eyes grew bright and his lips smiled. At first he looked at the Vicar, then his expression became abstracted. He seemed no longer to look at the Vicar, but through him, at something beyond, something in his memory or his imagination, something infinitely remote, undreamt of hitherto. . . .

The Vicar tried to follow the music. The air reminded him of a flame: it rushed up, shone, flickered and danced, passed and reappeared. No!—it did not reappear! Another air—like it and unlike it—shot up after it, wavered, vanished. Then another, the same and not the

same. It reminded him of the flaring tongues that palpitate and change above a newly lit fire. There are two airs—or *motifs*, which is it ?—thought the Vicar. He knew remarkably little of musical technique. They go dancing up, one pursuing the other, out of the fire of the incantation, pursuing, fluctuating, turning up into the sky. There below was the fire burning, aflame without fuel upon a level space, and there two flirting butterflies of sound, dancing away from it, up one over another, swift, abrupt, uncertain.

" Flirting butterflies were they ! " What was the Vicar thinking of ? Where was he ? In the little room next to his study, of course ! And the Angel standing in front of him smiling into his face, playing the violin, and looking through him as though he was only a window— That *motif* again, a yellow flare, spread fanlike by a gust, and now one, then with a swift eddying upward flight the other, the two things of fire and light pursuing one another again up into that clear immensity.

The study and the realities of life suddenly faded out of the Vicar's eyes, grew thinner and thinner like a mist that dissolves into air, and he and the Angel stood together on a pinnacle of wrought music, about which glittering melodies circled, and vanished, and reappeared.

He was in the land of Beauty, and once more the glory of Heaven was upon the Angel's face, and the glowing delights of colour pulsated on his wings. Himself the Vicar could not see. But I cannot tell you of the vision of that great and spacious land, of its incredible openness, and height and nobility. For there is no space there like ours, no time as we know it; one must needs speak by bungling metaphors and own in bitterness after all that one has failed. And it was only a vision. The wonderful creatures flying through the ether saw them not as they stood there, flew through them as one might pass through a wisp of mist. The Vicar lost all sense of duration, all sense of necessity—

"Ah!" said the Angel, suddenly putting down the fiddle.

The Vicar had forgotten the book on Political Economy, had forgotten everything until the Angel had done. For a minute he sat quite still. Then he woke up with a start. He was sitting on the old iron-bound chest.

"Really," he said slowly, "you are very clever."

He looked about him in a puzzled way. "I had a kind of vision while you were playing. I seemed to see—what did I see? It has gone."

He stood up with a dazzled expression upon his face. "I shall never play the violin again,"

he said. "I wish you would take it to your room—and keep it—and play to me again. I did not know anything of music until I heard you play. I do not feel as though I had ever heard any music before."

He stared at the Angel, then about him at the room. "I have never felt anything of this kind with music before," he said. He shook his head. "I shall never play again."

H. G. Wells.

Prelude to Day

THE violins had stirred with hopes that died,
Like winds too weak to usher in the morn,
While to the dark-toned basses still replied
The sad, uncertain echo of the horn.

The impending mass of music seemed to brood
Inert and torpid, as nocturnal earth
Waits pulseless in the vague disquietude
Of that last hour which shrouds the daylight's birth.

Until the blare of trumpets came to break
And splinter darkness into scarlet bars;
Then flute-scales, as from thrushes half awake,
And harp-chords like the farewell sigh of stars.

But last of all the effulgence of your voice
Dawned, scattering all the lingering fears of night,
And bade my heart grow warm, my soul rejoice,
As though God said once more, Let there be light.

Rosa Newmarch.

The Child-Musician

He had played for his lordship's levee,
He had played for her ladyship's whim,
Till the poor little head was heavy,
And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peaked and eerie,
And the large eyes strange and bright,
And they said—too late—" He is weary,
He shall rest for, at least, to-night ! "

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,
As they watched in the silent room,
With the sound of a strained cord breaking,
A something snapped in the gloom.

'Twas a string of his violoncello,
And they heard him stir in his bed :—
" Make room for a tired little fellow,
Kind God——" was the last that he said.

Austin Dobson.

Paganini

. . . To begin with the appearance of the "foreign wonder"—it is very different from what the indiscriminating newspaper accounts would lead you to suppose; he is certainly singular-looking; pale, slight, and with long, neglected hair; but I saw nothing whatever of that *wild fire*, that almost ferocious inspiration of mien which has been ascribed to him; indeed, I thought the expression of his countenance rather that of good-natured and mild *enjoyment* than of anything else—and his bearing altogether simple and natural. His first performance consisted of a tema, with variations, from the beautiful *Preghiera* in "Mose"; here I was rather disappointed, but merely because he did not play alone. I suppose the performance on the single string required the support of other instruments; but he occasionally drew from that string a tone of wailing, *heart-piercing* tenderness, almost too much to be sustained by any one whose soul can give the full responses. It was not, however, till his second performance, on all the strings, that I could form a full idea of his varied magic. A very delicate accompaniment on the piano

did not in the least interfere with the singleness of effect in this instance. The subject was the Venetian air, "Come to me when daylight sets"—how shall I give you any idea of all the versatility, *the play of soul*, embodied in the variations upon that simple air? Imagine a passage of the most fairy-like delicacy, more aerial than you would suppose it possible for human touch to produce, suddenly succeeded by an absolute *parody* of itself; the same notes repeated with an expression of absolute comic humour which forced me to laugh, however reluctantly—it was as if an old man, the "Ancient Mariner" himself, were to sing an impassioned Italian air, in a snoring voice, after Pasta. Well, after one of these sudden travesties, for I can call them nothing else, the *creature* would look all around him, with an air of the most delighted *bonhomie*, exactly like a witty child, who has just accomplished a piece of successful mischief. The *pizzicato* passages were also wonderful; the indescribably rapid notes seemed *flung* out in *sparks* of music with a triumphant glee which conveys the strongest impression I ever received of Genius rejoicing over its own bright creations. But I vainly wish that my words could impart to you a full conception of this wizard-like music.

There was nothing else of particular interest in

the evening's performance—a good deal of silvery warbling from Stockhausen, but I never find it leave any more vivid remembrance on my mind than the singing of birds. I am wrong, however—I must except one thing, "Napoleon's Midnight Review "—the music of which, by Neukomm, I thought superb. The words are translated from the German; they describe the hollow sound of a drum at midnight, and the peal of a ghostly trumpet arousing the dead hosts of Napoleon from their sleep under their northern snows, and along the Egyptian sands, and in the sunny fields of Italy. Then another trumpet-blast, and the chief himself arises, " with his martial cloak around him," to review the whole army: and thus it concludes—" the password given is—*France;* the answer—*St. Helene.*" The music, which is of a very wild, supernatural character, a good deal in Weber's *incantation* style, accords well with this grand idea; the single trumpet, followed by a long, rolling, ominous sound from the double-drum, made me quite thrill with indefinable feelings. Braham's singing was not equal to the instrumental part, but he did not disfigure it by his customary and *vulgarising* graces. . . . I enclose you a programme of the concert at which I again heard this triumphant music last night. It is impossible for me to describe how much of

ntense feeling its full-swelling, dreamy tones awoke within me. His second performance (the *Adagio a doppie corde*) made me imagine that I was then *first* awakening in what a German would call the " music land." Its predominant expression was that of overpowering, passionate regret, such, at least, was the dying languor of the long *sostenuto* notes that it seemed as if the musician was himself about to let fall his instrument, and sink under the mastery of his own emotion. It reminded me, by some secret and strange analogy, of a statue I once described to you, representing Sappho about to drop her lyre in utter desolation of heart. This was immediately followed by the rapid *flashing* music—for the strings were as if they sent out lightning in their glee—of the most joyous rondo by Kreutzer you can imagine. The last piece, the " Dance of the Witches," is a complete exemplification of the grotesque in music—some parts of it imitate the quavering, garrulous voices of very old women, half scolding, half complaining—and then would come a burst of wild, fantastic, half-fearful gladness. I think Burns's " Tam o' Shanter " (not Mr. Thom's—by way of contrast to Sappho) something of a parallel in poetry to this strange production of music. I saw more of Paganini's countenance last night, and was still more pleased with it than before ;

the original mould in which it had been cast is of a decidedly fine and intellectual character, though the features are so worn by the wasting fire which appears his vital element. . . . I did not hear Paganini again after the performance I described to you, but I received a very eloquent description from —— of a subsequent triumph of his genius. It was a concerto, of a dramatic character, and intended, as I was told, to embody the little tale of a wanderer sinking to sleep in a solitary place at midnight. He is supposed to be visited by a solemn and impressive vision, imagined in music of the most thrilling style. Then, after all his lonely fears and wild fantasies, the day-spring breaks upon him in a triumphant rondo and all is joy and gladness. . . .

——related to me a most interesting conversation he had held with Paganini in a private circle. The latter was describing to him the sufferings (do you remember a line of Byron's,

The starry Galileo, with his woes?)

by which he pays for his consummate excellence. He scarcely knows what sleep is, and his nerves are wrought to such almost preternatural acuteness, that harsh, even common sounds, are often torture to him; he is sometimes unable to bear a whisper in his room. His passion for music he

describes as an all-absorbing, a *consuming* one ; in fact, he looks as if no other life than that ethereal one of melody were circulating within his veins ; but he added, with a glow of triumph kindling through deep sadness, " *Mais c'est un don du ciel.*" I heard all this, which was no more than I had fully imagined, with a still deepening conviction that it is the gifted beyond all others —those whom the multitude believe to be rejoicing in their own fame, strong in their own resources—who have most need of true hearts to rest upon, and of hope in God to support them. . . .

Felicia Hemans.

Paganini

So play'd of late to every passing thought
With finest change (might I but half as well
So write !) the pale magician of the bow,
Who brought from Italy the tales, made true,
Of Grecian lyres ; and on his sphery hand,
Loading the air with dumb expectancy,
Suspended, ere it fell, a nation's breath.

He smote,—and clinging to the serious chords
With godlike ravishment, drew forth a breath,
So deep, so strong, so fervid thick with love,

Blissful, yet laden as with twenty prayers,
That Juno yearn'd with no diviner soul
To the first burthen of the lips of Jove.

The exceeding mystery of the loveliness
Sadden'd delight ; and with his mournful look,
Dreary and gaunt, hanging his pallid face
'Twixt his dark flowing locks, he almost seem'd
To feeble or to melancholy eyes,
One that had parted with his soul for pride,
And in the sable secret liv'd forlorn.

But true and earnest, all too happily
That skill dwelt in him, serious with its joy ;
For noble now he smote the exulting strings,
And bade them march before his stately will ;
And now he lov'd them like a cheek, and laid
Endearment on them, and took pity sweet ;
And now he was all mirth, or all for sense
And reason, carving out his thoughts like prose
After his poetry ; or else he laid
His own soul prostrate at the feet of love,
And with a full and trembling fervour deep,
In kneeling and close-creeping urgency,
Implor'd some mistress with hot tears ; which past,
And after patience had brought right of peace,
He drew, as if from thoughts finer than hope,
Comfort around him in ear-soothing strains

And elegant composure ; or he turn'd
To heaven instead of earth, and rais'd a pray'r
So earnest vehement, yet so lowly sad,
Mighty with want and all poor human tears,
That never saint, wrestling with earthly love,
And in mid-age unable to get free,
Tore down from heav'n such pity. Or behold,
In his despair, (for such, from what he spoke
Of grief before it, or of love, 'twould seem,)
Jump would he into some strange wail uncouth
Of witches' dance, ghastly with whinings thin
And palsied nods—mirth wicked, sad, and weak.
And then with show of skill mechanical,
Marvellous as witchcraft, he would overthrow
That vision with a show'r of notes like hail,
Or sudden mixtures of all difficult things
Never yet heard ; flashing the sharp tones now,
In downward leaps like swords ; now rising fine
Into some utmost tip of minute sound,
From whence he stepp'd into a higher and higher
On viewless points, till laugh took leave of him ;
Or he would fly as if from all the world
To be alone and happy, and you should hear
His instrument become a tree far off,
A nest of birds and sunbeams, sparkling both,
A cottage bow'r ; or he would condescend,
In playful wisdom which knows no contempt,
To bring to laughing memory, plain as sight,
A farm-yard with its inmates, ox and lamb,

The whistle and the whip, with feeding hens
In household fidget muttering evermore,
And, rising as in scorn, crown'd chanticleer,
Ordaining silence with his sovereign crow,
Then from one chord of his amazing shell
Would he fetch out the voice of quires, and weight
Of the built organ ; or some two-fold strain
Moving before him in sweet-going yoke,
Ride like an Eastern conqueror, round whose state
Some light Morisco leaps with his guitar ;
And ever and anon o'er these he'd throw
Jets of small notes like pearl, or like the pelt
Of lovers' sweetmeats on Italian lutes
From windows on a feast-day, or the leaps
Of pebbled water, sprinkled in the sun,
One chord effecting all :—and when the ear
Felt there was nothing present but himself
And silence, and the wonder drew deep sighs,
Then would his bow lie down again in tears,
And speak to some one in a pray'r of love,
Endless, and never from his heart to go :
Or he would talk as of some secret bliss,
And at the close of all the wonderment
(Which himself shar'd) near and more near would come
Into the inmost ear, and whisper there
Breathings so soft, so low, so full of life,

Touch'd beyond sense, and only to be borne
By pauses which made each less bearable,
That out of pure necessity for relief
From that heap'd joy, and bliss that laugh'd
for pain,
The thunder of th' uprolling house came down,
And bow'd the breathing sorcerer into smiles.

Leigh Hunt.

VII

MUSIC IN ITALY

AN AMATEUR

And then he was a Count, and then he knew
Music, and dancing, fiddling, French and Tuscan ;
The last not easy, be it known to you,
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.
He was a critic upon operas, too,
And knew all niceties of the sock and buskin ;
And no Venetian audience could endure a
Song, scene, or air, when he cried " seccatura ! "

His " bravo " was decisive, for that sound
Hush'd " Academie " sigh'd in silent awe ;
The fiddlers trembled as he look'd around,
For fear of some false note's detected flaw ;
The " prima donna's " tuneful heart would bound,
Dreading the deep damnation of his " bah ! "
Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto,
Wish'd him five fathom under the Rialto.

He patronised the Improvisatori,
Nay, could himself extemporise some stanzas,
Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a story,
Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance as
Italians can be, though in this their glory
Must surely yield the palm to that which France has ;
In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,
And to his very valet seem'd a hero.

Lord Byron.

Music in Venice

I HEARD much good Musicke in St. *Markes* Church, but especially that of a treble violl which was so excellent, that I thinke no man could surpass it. Also there were sagbuts and cornets as at Saint *Lawrence* feast which yielded passing good musicke. The third feast was upon Saint *Roches* day being Saturday and the sixth day of August, where I heard the best musicke that ever I did in all my life both in the morning and the afternoone, so good that I would willingly goe an hundred miles a foote at any time to heare the like. . . .

This feast consisted principally of Musicke, which was both vocall and instrumental, so good, so delectable, so rare, so admirable, so superexcellent, that it did even ravish and stupifie all those strangers that never heard the like. But how others were affected with it I know not ; for mine owne part, I can say this, that I was for the time even rapt up with St. *Paul* into the third heaven. Sometimes there sung sixteene or twenty men together, having their master or moderator to keep them in order ; and when they sung, the instrumentall musitians played also. Sometimes

sixteene played together upon their instruments, ten Sagbuts, foure Cornets, and two Violdegambaes of an extraordinary greatness; sometimes tenne, sixe Sagbuts and foure Cornets; sometimes two, a Cornet and a treble violl. Of those treble viols I heard three severall there, whereof each was so good, especially one that I observed above the rest, that I never heard the like before. Those that played upon the treble viols, sung and played together, and sometimes two singular fellowes played together upon Theorboes, to which they sung also, who yielded admirable sweet musicke, but so still that they could scarce be heard but by those that were very near them. These two Theorbists concluded that nights musicke, which continued three whole howers at the least. For they beganne about five of the clocke, and ended not before eight. Also it continued as long in the morning: at every time that every severall musicke played, the Organs, whereof there are seven faire paire in that room, standing al in a rowe together, plaied with them.

Of the singers there were three or foure so excellent that I thinke few or none in Christendome do excell them, especially one, who had such a purnesse and (as I may in a manner say) such a supernaturall voice for sweetnesse, that I think there was never

a better singer in all the world, insomuch that he did not onely give the most pleasant contentment that could be imagined, to all the hearers but also did as it were astonish and amaze them. . . . It was the more worthy of admiration, because he was a middle-aged man as about forty years old. For nature doth more commonly bestowe such a singularitie of voice upon boyes and striplings, than upon men of such yeares. Besides it was farre the more excellent, because it was nothing forced, strained, or affected, but came from him with the greatest facilitie that ever I heard. Truely I think that had a Nightingale beene in the same roome, and contended with him for the superioritie, something perhaps he might excell him, because God hath granted that little birde such a priviledge for the sweetnesse of his voice, as to none other: but I think he could not much. To conclude, I attribute so much to this rare fellow for his singing, that I thinke the country where he was borne, may be as proude for breeding so singular a person as *Smyrna* was of her *Homer*, *Verona* of her *Catullus*, or *Mantua* of *Virgil:* but exceeding happy may that citie, or towne, or person bee that possesseth this miracle of nature. These musitians had bestowed upon them by that company of St. *Roche* an hundred duckets,

which is twenty-three pound sixe shillings eightpence starling. Thus much concerning the musicke of those famous feasts of St. *Laurence*, the Assumption of our Lady, and St. *Roche*.

T. Coryate.

Toccata at Galuppi's

Oh, Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad to find!
I can hardly misconceive you ; it would prove
me deaf and blind ;
But although I give you credit, 'tis with such a
heavy mind !

Here you come with your old music, and here's
all the good it brings.
What, they lived once thus at Venice, where
the merchants were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to
wed the sea with rings ?

Ay, because the sea's the street there ; and 'tis
arched by . . . what you call
. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it, where
they kept the carnival !
I was never out of England—it's as if I saw
it all !

Did young people take their pleasure when the
sea was warm in May ?
Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning
ever to midday,
When they made up fresh adventures for the
morrow, do you say ?

Well (and it was graceful of them) they'd break
talk off and afford
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet, he to
finger on his sword,
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at
the clavichord ?

What ? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths
diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something ? Those suspensions,
those solutions—" Must we die ? "
Those commiserating sevenths—Life might last !
we can but try !

" Were you happy ? "—" Yes."—" And are you
still as happy ? "—" Yes."—And you ? "
—" Then more kisses."—Did *I* stop them,
when a million seemed so few ?
Hark—the dominant's persistence, till it must
be answered to.

So an octave struck the answer. Oh, they
praised you, I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike
at grave and gay!
I can always leave off talking, when I hear a
master play."

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due
time, one by one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with
deeds as well undone,
Death came tacitly and took them where they
never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason,—think to take
my stand nor swerve
Till I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's
cold reserve,
In you come with your cold music till I creep
thro' every nerve.

. . . . .

Robert Browning.

Italian Music

I HAD brought with me from Paris the prejudice of that city against Italian music; but I had also received from nature a sensibility and niceness of distinction which prejudice cannot withstand. I soon contracted that passion for Italian music with which it inspires all those who are capable of feeling its excellence. In listening to *barcarolles*, I found I had not yet known what singing was, and I soon became so fond of the opera that, tired of babbling, eating, and gaming in the boxes, when I wish to listen I frequently withdrew from the company to another part of the theatre. There, quite alone, shut up in my box, I abandoned myself, notwithstanding the length of the representation, to the pleasure of enjoying it at ease to the conclusion. One evening, at the theatre of Saint Chrysostom, I fell into a more profound sleep than if I had been in my bed. The loud and brilliant airs did not disturb my repose. But who can explain the delicious sensations given me by the soft harmony of the angelic music by which I was charmed from sleep? What an awakening! What ravishment! What ecstasy, when at the same instant I opened my

ears and eyes! My first idea was to believe I was in paradise. The ravishing air, which I still recollect and shall never forget, began with these words—

Conservami la bella
Che si m'accende il cor!

I was desirous of having it; I had it and kept it for a time; but it was not the same thing upon paper as in my head. The notes were the same, but the thing was different. This divine composition can never be executed but in my mind in the same manner as it was on the evening when it awoke me from sleep.

A kind of music far superior, in my opinion, to that of operas, and which in all Italy has not its equal, nor perhaps in the whole world, is that of the *scuole*. The *scuole* are houses of charity, established for the education of young girls without fortune, to whom the Republic afterwards gives a portion either in marriage or for the cloister. Amongst talents cultivated in these young girls, music is in the first rank. Every Sunday at the church of each of the four *scuole* during vespers, motets or anthems, with full choruses, accompanied by a great orchestra, and composed and directed by the best masters in Italy, are sung in the galleries by girls only, not one of whom is more than twenty years of age. I

have not an idea of anything so voluptuous and affecting as this music: the richness of the art, the exquisite taste of the vocal parts, the excellence of the voices, the justness of the execution, everything in these delightful concerts concurs to produce an impression which certainly is not in exact accordance with the taste of the day, but from which I am of opinion no heart is secure. Carrio and I never failed being present at these vespers of the Mendicanti, and we were not alone. The church was always full of lovers of the art, and even the actors of the opera came there to form their tastes after these excellent models. What vexed me was the accursed iron grate, which suffered nothing to escape but sounds, and concealed from me the angels of which they were worthy. I talked of nothing else. One day I spoke of it at Monsieur Le Blond's. "If you are so desirous," said he, "to see those little girls, it will be an easy matter to satisfy your wishes. I am one of the administrators of the house, I will give you a collation with them." I did not let him rest until he had fulfilled his promise. Monsieur Le Blond presented to me, one after the other, these celebrated female singers, of whom the names and voices were all with which I was acquainted. "Come, Sophia"; she was horrid. "Come, Cattina"; she had but one

eye. "Come, Bettina"; the smallpox had entirely disfigured her. Scarcely one of them was without some striking defect. He laughed cruelly at my surprise; however, two or three of them appeared tolerable: these never sang but in the choruses; I was almost in despair. During the collation we endeavoured to attract their attention, and they soon became enlivened; ugliness does not exclude the graces, which I found they possessed. I said to myself, "They cannot sing in this manner without intelligence and sensibility, they must have both"; in fine, my manner of seeing them changed to such a degree that I left the house almost in love with each of these ugly faces. I had had scarcely courage enough to return to their vespers; I had now gained reassurance. I still found their singing delightful; and their voices so much embellished their persons, that whilst they sang, in spite of my eyes I obdurately continued to think them beautiful.

Music in Italy is accompanied with so trifling an expense that it is not worth while for such as have a taste for it to deny themselves the pleasure it affords. I hired a harpsichord, and for half a crown I had at my apartment four or five symphonists, with whom I practised once a week in executing such airs as had given me

most pleasure at the opera. I also had some symphonies performed from my *Muses Galantes*. Whether these pleased the performers, or the ballet-master of St. John Chrysostom wished to flatter me, he desired to have two of them, and I afterwards had the pleasure of hearing these executed by that admirable orchestra. They were danced too by little Bettina, a pretty and amiable girl.

J. J. Rousseau.

The Venetian Gondolier

HERE rest the weary oar !—soft airs
Breathe out in the o'erreaching sky ;
And Night—sweet Night—serenely wears
A smile of peace : her noon is high.

Where the tall fir in quiet stands,
And waves, embracing the chaste shores,
Move over sea-shells and bright sands,
Is heard the sound of dipping oars.

Swift o'er the wave the light bark springs,
Love's midnight hour draws lingering near ;
And list !—his tuneful viol strings
The young Venetian Gondolier.

Lo ! on the silver-mirrored deep,
  On earth and her embosomed lakes,
And where the silent rivers sweep,
  From the thin cloud fair moonlight breaks.

Soft music breathes around, and dies
  On the calm bosom of the sea ;
Whilst in her cell the novice sighs
  Her vespers to her rosary.

At their dim altars bow fair forms
  In tender charity for those,
That, helpless left to life's rude storms,
  Have never found this calm repose.

The bell swings to its midnight chime
  Relieved against the deep blue sky.
Haste !—dip the oar again—'t is time
  To seek Geneva's balcony.

H. W. Longfellow.

Street Music in Rome

I. The Pifferari

WHOEVER has passed the month of December in Rome will remember to have been awakened from his morning dreams by the gay notes of the *pifferari* playing in the streets below, before the shrines of the Madonna and Bambino, —and the strains of one set of performers will scarcely have ceased before the distant notes of another set of pilgrims will be heard to continue the well-known *novena*. The *pifferari* are generally *contadini* of the Abruzzi Mountains, who, at the season of Advent, leave their home to make pilgrimages to Rome,—stopping before all the wayside shrines as they journey along, to pay their glad music of welcome to the Virgin and the coming Messiah. Their song is called a *novena*, from its being sung for nine consecutive days—first, for nine days previous to the Festa of the Madonna, which occurs on the 8th of December, and afterwards for the nine days preceding Christmas. The same words and music serve, however, for both celebrations. The *pifferari* always go in couples, one playing on the *zampogna*, or bagpipe, the bass and

treble accompaniment, and the other on the *piffero*, or pastoral pipe, which carries the air; and for the month before Christmas the sound of their instruments resounds through the streets of Rome, wherever there is a shrine—whether at the corners of the streets, in the depths of the shops, down little lanes, in the centre of the Corso, in the interior courts of the palaces, or on the stairways of private houses.

Their costume is extremely picturesque. On their heads they wear conical felt hats adorned with a frayed peacock's feather, or a faded band of red cords and tassels,—their bodies are clad in red waistcoats, blue jackets, and smallclothes of skin or yellowish homespun cloth,—skin sandals are bound to their feet with cords that interlace each other up the leg as far as the knee,—and over all is worn a long brown or blue cloak with a short cape, buckled closely round the neck. Sometimes, but rarely, this cloak is of a deep red with a scalloped cape. As they stand before the pictures of the Madonna, their hats placed on the ground before them, and their thick, black, dishevelled hair covering their sunburnt brows, blowing away on their instruments or pausing to sing their *novena*, they form a picture which every artist desires to paint.

. . . Sometimes it is a father and son who play together, but oftener two old friends who make the pilgrimage in pairs. This morning, as I was going out for a walk round the walls, two admirable specimens of the *pifferari* were performing the *novena* before a shrine at the corner of the street. The player of the bagpipe was an old man, with a sad but very amiable face, who droned out the bass and treble in a most earnest and deprecatory manner. He looked as if he had stood still, tending his sheep, nearly all his life, until the peace and quiet of Nature had sunk into his being, or, if you will, until he had become assimilated to the animals he tended. The other, who played the pipe, was a man of middle age, stout, vigorous, with a forest of tangled black hair, and dark quick eyes that were fixed steadily on the Virgin, while he blew and vexed the little brown pipe with rapid runs and nervous *fioriture*, until great drops of sweat dripped from its round open mouth. Sometimes, when he could not play fast enough to satisfy his eagerness, he ran his finger up and down the vents. Then, suddenly lowering his instrument, he would scream, in a strong peasant-voice, verse after verse of the *novena*, to the accompaniment of the bagpipe. One was like a slow old Italian *Vettura* all lumbered with luggage and held back by its

drag; the other panting and nervous at his work as an American locomotive, and as constantly running off the rails. Both, however, were very earnest at their occupation. As they stood there playing, a little group gathered round. A scamp of a boy left his sport to come and beat time with a stick on the stone step before them; several children clustered near; and two or three women, with black-eyed infants in their arms, also paused to listen and sympathize. At last the playing ceased. The *pifferari* took up their hats and looked smilingly round at us.

"Where do you come from?" I asked.

"*Eh!*" said the *pifferaro*, showing all his teeth, and shrugging his shoulders good-naturedly, while the other echoed the pantomime. "*Dal Regno*"—for so the Abruzzi peasants call the kingdom of Naples.

"And do you come every year?"

"*Si, signore.* He [indicating his friend] and I [pointing to himself] have been companions for thirty-three years, and every year we have come to Rome to play the *novena.*"

To this the old *zampognaro* bent his head on one side, and said assentingly,—"*Eh! per trenta tre anni*——"

And "*Ecco,*" continued the *pifferaro*, bursting in before the *zampognaro* could go on, and

pointing to two stalwart youths of about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, who at this moment came up the street with their instruments,—"These are our two sons. He is mine" —indicating one with his reversed thumb; "and that other is his"—jerking his head towards his companion. "And they, too, are going to play in company, as we do."

"For thirty-three years more, let us hope," said I.

"*Eh! speriamo*" (Let us hope so), was the answer of the *pifferaro*, as he showed all his teeth in the broadest of smiles. Then, with a motion of his hand, he set both the young men going, he himself joining in, straining out his cheeks, blowing all the breath of his body into the little pipe, and running up and down the vents with a sliding finger, until finally he brought up against a high, shrill note, to which he gave the full force of his lungs, and after holding it in loud blast for a moment, startled us by breaking off, without gradation, into a silence as sudden as if the music had snapped short off like a pipe-stem.

At my request they repeated the words of the *novena* they had been singing, and I took them down from their lips.

The air to which this is sung is very simple and sweet, though monotonous, and if for no

other reason is interesting as being one of the oldest fragments of popular song existing in Italy. Between the verses a curious little *ritornello* is played, and at the close of the last verse there is a strange and solemn adagio.

But the Roman *pifferari* cannot really be heard to advantage in the streets of Rome. In the mountains their pipe and bagpipe produce a wholly different impression, and I remember to have heard them once towards sundown at San Germano, when the effect was charming.

Just before reaching the town, the road passes within a stone's throw of the ancient amphitheatre built by Umidia Quadratilla, and mentioned by Pliny. Here we ordered the carriage to stop, and running through the furrows of a ploughed field, ascended the slope of the hill on which it stands. Though ruined in parts it is a noble structure; the exterior walls of reticulated work are still in good condition, and its main front is tolerably perfect. Time has tinged its marble facings with a rich yellow hue, but has failed to eat out the cement or to shake the solid courses of its stones. Here and there, shrubs, flowers, and one or two fig-trees have found a footing and grace its walls. Climbing through one of the round arches of entrance which is half choked with

rubbish, we found ourselves within the enclosure: the interior is far more ruined than the exterior; the seats are all crumbled away and obliterated, and Indian corn, beans, and potatoes were growing in the arena. As we stood looking in silence upon this sad decay, we heard in the distance the pipe and bagpipe of some shepherds playing a melancholy pastoral tune. Nothing could be more charming, more perfectly in rhyme with the mountains and the ruins. I could scarcely have believed such tones could come from a bagpipe. Softened by the distance, they lost all their nasal drawl, and stole sweetly to our ears with that special charm which the rudest native music has when heard in its native place. Looking through the archway over the distant valley and mountains, we listened to them enchanted.

II. Roman Street-bands and Ballad-singers

The *pifferari* are by no means the only street musicians in Rome, though they take the city by storm at Christmas. Every day under my window comes a band of four or five, who play airs and concerted pieces from the operas—and a precious work they make of it sometimes!

Not only do the instruments go very badly together, but the parts they play are not arranged for them. A violone grunts out a low accompaniment to a vinegar-sharp violin which saws out the air, while a trumpet blazes in at intervals to endeavour to unite the two, and a flute does what it can, but not what it would. Sometimes, instead of a violone, a hoarse trombone, with a violent cold in the head, snorts out the bass impatiently, gets ludicrously uncontrollable and boastful at times, and is always so choleric that, instead of waiting for the *cadenzas* to finish, it bursts in, knocks them over as by a blow on the head, roars away on false intervals, and overwhelms every other voice with its own noisy vociferation. The harmonic arrangements are very odd. Each instrument seems to consider itself ill-treated when reduced to an accompaniment or bass, and is constantly endeavouring, however unfitted for it, to get possession of the air—the melody being, for all Italians, the principal object. The violin, however, weak of voice as it is, always carries the day, and the other instruments steal discontentedly back to their secondary places, the snuffy old violone keeping up a constant growl at its ill-luck, and the trombone now and then leaping out like a tiger on its prey.

Far better and more characteristic are the ballad-singers, who generally go in couples—an old man, dim of sight, perhaps blind, who plays the violin, and his wife or daughter, who has a guitar, tamborello, or at times a mandolin. Sometimes a little girl accompanies them, sings with them, and carries round a tin box, or the tamborello, to collect *baiocchi.* They sing long ballads to popular melodies, some of which are very pretty and gay, and for a *baiocco* they sell a sheet containing the printed words of the song. Sometimes it is in the form of a dialogue,—either a love-making, a quarrel, a reconciliation, or a leave-taking,—each singer taking an alternate verse. Sometimes it is a story with a chorus, or a religious conversation-ballad, or a story of a saint from the Bible. Those drawn from the Bible are generally very curious paraphrases of the original simple text turned into the simplest and commonest of idioms of the people; one of them may be found in the Appendix to Goethe's "Italienische Reise."

Every night during the spring, and sometimes during the clear evenings of winter, around the Piazza Barberini may be heard the sound of the guitar playing in accompaniment to a mandoline, as the performers march up and down the streets or stop before the little

osterias; and as summer comes on, and the evenings grow warm, begin the street serenades, —sometimes like that of Lindoro in the opening of the " Barbiere di Sevilla," but generally with only one voice accompanied by the same instruments. These serenades are, for the most part, given by a lover or friend to his *innamorata*, and the words are expressive of the tender passion ; but there are also *seranate di gelosia*, or satirical serenades, when the most impertinent and stinging verses are sung. Long before arriving, the serenaders may be heard marching up the street to the thrum of their instruments. They then place themselves before the windows of the fair one, and, surrounded by a group of men and boys, make proclamation of their love in loud and often violent tones. It seems sometimes as if they considered the best method of expressing the intensity of their passion was by the volume of their voice. Certainly, in these cases, the light of love is not hidden under a bushel, for these serenaders shout out their songs in stentorian tones, that pierce the silent air of night, and echo through the deserted streets. But though the voices are harsh, and the music rude and wild, the words of some of these serenades are very pretty and graceful, and particularly those that go by the name of " Sospiri d'amore." In the

mountain towns the *contadini* know by heart hundreds of little songlets, which they shout under the windows of their *sposine* and lady loves. Most of them consist of few lines, and all are variations upon the same theme.

Among the Trasteverini, particularly, these serenades are common. Some of them are very clever in their improvisations and imitations of different dialects, particularly of the Neapolitan, in which there are so many charming songs. Their skill in improvisation, however, is not generally displayed in their serenades, but in the *osterias*, during the evenings of the *festas* in summer. There it is that their quickness and epigrammatic turn of expression are best seen. Two disputants will, when in good humour and warmed with wine, string off verse after verse at each other's expense, full of point and fun—the guitar burring along in the intervals, and a chorus of laughter saluting every good hit.

One lucky night I shall never forget, when we made a little party of artists and poets and dined together in a little *osteria* not far from the Piazza Barberini. As our dinner drew to a close we had in the mandoline and guitar, and all the opera tunes were played with great cleverness. Was there ever a better mandoline? How it tingled and quivered as it nervously

rang through the air, with its stinging vibrations and tense silvery shakes, while the soft woolly throb of the guitar kept up a constant accompaniment below! The old cobwebs on the dusky, soiled, and smoky beams of the ceiling, where the colours of old frescoes were still to be seen, shook to the music, and the flame of the little onion-shaped light before the coarsely painted engraving of the Madonna seemed to wink in sympathy. Old Zia Nica herself grew excited when a spirited Tarentella was played. She had danced it when young in Naples. "*Che bella cosa!* and I could dance it now," she cried. "Brava Zia Nica!—give us a Tarantella," was the cry all round. "*Eh! Perche nò?*"—and up she stood and shook her long fell of hair, and laughed a wild laugh, and showed her yellow teeth, and up and down the old *osteria* she shuffled and tramped, flinging up her hands and snapping her fingers, and panting and screaming, till at last with a whoop she fell down into her chair, planted her two hands akimbo on her knees, glared at the company and cried out, "Old Zia Nica's not dead yet. *Nô, Signori!* the old woman is not so old but that she can dance a Tarentella still—*grazie a Dio—nô, Signori-i-i-i.*"

III. The Improvisatori

Scarcely was this performance finished when the glass door jingled at the entrance of a little middle-aged fellow who had come across the street for a *fiasco* of wine. He was received with a shout of welcome. "Give us a toast in rhyme," cried one. "Bravo! give us a toast in rhyme," echoed all; and spinning round on his feet with a quick, eager face, and flinging out his hands with nervous gesticulation, he suddenly, in a high voice, poured out a volley of humorous rhymes upon one after another of his friends, then launched a *brindisi* at us, and —hey presto change!—was out of the door in a minute, the sharp bell jingling as he closed it, and a peal of laughter pursuing him. So being in the humour, we called for some improvisation, and the mandoline and guitar began an air and accompaniment in *ottava rima*. After a minute or two, one of the men at the head of the table opposite broke out in a loud voice, and sang, or rather chanted, a strophe; and scarcely had the instruments finished the little *ritornello*, when another answered him in a second strophe —to this he responded, and so alternately for some time the improvisation went on without

a break. Then suddenly rose from the opposite end a third person, a carter, who poured out two or three strophes without stopping; and after him still another carter broke in. So that we had four persons improvising in alternation. This lasted a full half-hour, and during the whole time there was not a pause or hesitation. The language used was uncommonly good, and the ideas were of a character you would little have anticipated from such a company. The theme was art and love and poetry and music, and some of the recitation was original and spirited. Out of Italy could anything like this be seen? But the sound of music and song had reached the ears of the police, and those of their white-barred figures and chapeaux appeared at the door, and despite all our prayers they stopped the improvisation. This broke up the fun, and it was then proposed that we should go to the Colosseum in two carriages with the music. No sooner said than done. Off ran Antonio for the carriages, and in a few minutes we were on our way, through the Corso and down the Forum, the mandoline and guitar playing all the way.

IV. The Campagna Song

In the busiest street of Rome, the pure Campagna song may often be heard from the throat of some peasant, as he slowly rumbles along in his loaded wine-cart—the little dog at his side barking a sympathetic chorus. This song is rude enough, and seems in measure founded upon the church chant. It is in the minor key, and consists ordinarily of two phrases, ending in a screaming monotone, prolonged until the breath of the singer fails, and often running down at the close into a blurred chromatic. No sooner is one strain ended than it is suddenly taken up again in *prestissimo* time and "slowed" down to the same dismal conclusion. Heard near, it is deafening and disagreeable. But when refined by distance it has a sad and pleasant effect, and seems to belong to the place, —the long wail at the close being the very type of the melancholy stretches of the Campagna. In the same way I have frequently thought that the *Jodeln* of the Swiss was an imitation of the echo of the mountains, each note repeated first in octave, or fifth, and then in its third below. The Campagna song is to be heard not only in the Campagna, but every-

where in the country—in the vineyards, in the grain-fields, in mountain and valley, from companies working together, and from solitary *contadini*—wherever the influence and sentiment of the Roman Campagna is felt. The moment we get into Tuscany, on the one side, or over into Naples, on the other, it begins to be lost. It was only the other day, at nightfall, that I was sauntering out on the desolate Campagna towards Civita Vecchia. The shadows were deepening and the mist beginning to creep whitely along the deep hollows. Everything was dreary and melancholy enough. As I paused to listen to the solitude, I heard the grind of a distant invisible cart, and the sound of a distant voice singing. Slowly the cart came up over the crest of the hill, a dark spot against the twilight sky, and mounted on the top of a load of brushwood sat a *contadino*, who was singing to himself these words—not very consolatory, perhaps, but so completely in harmony with the scene and the time that they struck me forcibly :—

> E, bella, tu non piangera-a-a-i,
> Sul giorno ch' io sarô mor-or-or-to-o-o-o-o-o.

Not only at night and to celebrate their love do the Italian peasants sing—they sing at their

work and at their play. All the long summer days, standing in the breast-high corn, or beating with heavy spade the soil, or plucking clusters of purple grapes, they shriek out their ballads and songs in stentorian tones that may be heard for a mile. During the harvesting seasons they gather together at night, and lying under the light of the moon upon their threshing floors, sing in chorus their simple melodies. And in the long winter evenings, sitting round the smouldering embers of their fires, they "rouse the night owls" at their *veglie*, or beat time to their constantly interrupted song with the clattering of their looms. The city also sings as well as the country. The carpenter as he drives his plane; the blacksmith as he wields his hammer and strikes from the sputtering iron its fiery constellations; the cobbler as he pounds the soles of old shoes; the mason as he lays his bricks; the rougher-out as the chips of ringing marble fly under the steel point of his chisel; the maid-of-all-work as she draws water in the court-yard—all solace themselves with song. As the crowds stream back from the theatre, towards midnight, you hear them shouting the airs of the opera they have just been listening to; and, oftentimes, on festa nights, in the "sma'

hours ayont the twal," the prolonged screaming song of the peasants rouses you from your first slumbers as it sounds through the echoing streets.

W. W. Story.

VIII

HARP AND ORGAN

Whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen ; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.

John Milton (" Paradise Lost ").

TO MUSICK

Begin to charme ; and as thou stroak'st mine ears
With thy enchantment, melt me into tears.
Then let thy active hand scu'd o're thy Lyre :
And make my spirits frantick with the fire.
That done, sink down into a silv'rie straine ;
And make me smooth as Balme, and Oile again.

Robert Herrick.

The Origin of the Harp

'Tis believed that this Harp, which I wake now for thee,
Was a Siren of old, who sung under the sea ;
And who often, at eve, through the bright waters roved,
To meet on the green shore a youth whom she loved.

But she loved him in vain, for he left her to weep,
And in tears, all the night, her gold tresses to steep,
Till Heaven looked with pity on true love so warm,
And changed to this soft Harp the sea-maiden's form.

Still her bosom rose fair—still her cheeks smiled the same—
While her sea-beauties gracefully form'd the light frame ;
And her hair, as, let loose, o'er her white arm it fell,
Was changed to bright chords, uttering melody's spell.

Hence it came, that this soft Harp so long hath
been known
To mingle love's language with sorrow's sad
tone ;
Till *thou* didst divide them, and teach the fond lay
To speak love when I'm near thee, and grief
when away !

Thomas Moore.

To an Instrument

OTHERS, before he came with mastery
To set thy stops to choral-songs of praise,
Or draw thy subtlest undertones from thee,
Essayed to wake thy spirit in past days.
His touch is stilled for ever. Yet I stand
And listen while thy soulless, fickle keys,
In dull obedience to a stranger's hand,
For other ears give forth fresh voluntaries.
And some there be, whose hearts thus lightly
move
In shallow melody to each new touch,
And deem these mutable vibrations Love.
O forgotten, mine is not of such !

My heart shall be like some rare instrument,
Whose strings broke when its only player went.

Rosa Newmarch.

Like a Musician

LIKE a musician that with flying finger
Startles the voice of some new instrument,
And, though he know that in one string are blent
All its extremes of sound, yet still doth linger
Among the lighter threads, fearing to start
The deep soul of that one melodious wire,
Lest it, unanswering, dash his high desire,
And spoil the hopes of his expectant heart ;—
Thus with my mistress oft conversing, I
Stir every lighter theme with careless voice,
Gathering sweet music and celestial joys
From the harmonious soul o'er which I fly ;
Yet o'er the one deep master-chord I hover,
And dare not stoop, fearing to tell—I love her.

William Caldwell Roscoe.

Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha

HIST, but a word, fair and soft !
  Forth and be judged, Master Hugues !
Answer the question I've put you so oft—
  What do you mean by your mountainous
    fugues ?
See, we're alone in the loft,

I, the poor organist here,
  Hugues, the composer of note—
Dead, though, and done with, this many a year—
  Let's have a colloquy, something to quote,
Make the world prick up its ear!

See, the church empties apace,
  Fast they extinguish the lights—
Hallo, there, sacristan! five minutes' grace!
  Here's a crank pedal wants setting to rights,
Baulks one of holding the base.

See, our huge house of the sounds
  Hushing its hundreds at once,
Bids the last loiterer back to his bounds
  —Oh, you may challenge them, not a response
Get the church saints on their rounds!

(Saints go their rounds, who shall doubt?
  —March, with the moon to admire,
Up nave, down chancel, turn transept about,
  Supervise all betwixt pavement and spire,
Put rats and mice to the rout—

Aloys and Jurien and Just—
  Order things back to their place,
Have a sharp eye lest the candlesticks rust,
  Rub the church plate, darn the sacrament lace,
Clear the desk velvet of dust.)

Here's your book, younger folks shelve!
  Played I not off-hand and runningly,
Just now, your masterpiece, hard number twelve?
  Here's what should strike,—could one handle it cunningly.
Help the axe, give it a helve!

Page after page as I played,
  Every bar's rest where one wipes
Sweat from one's brow, I looked up and surveyed
  O'er my three claviers, yon forest of pipes
Whence you still peeped in the shade.

Sure you were wishful to speak,
  You, with brow ruled like a score,
Yes, and eyes buried in pits on each cheek
  Like two great breves as they wrote them of yore
Each side that bar, your straight beak!

Sure you said—"Good, the mere notes!
  Still, couldst thou take my intent,
Know what procured me our Company's votes—
  Masters being lauded and sciolists shent
Parted the sheep from the goats!"

Well then, speak up, never flinch!
  Quick, ere my candle's a snuff
—Burnt, do you see? to its uttermost inch—
  I believe in you, but that's not enough,
Give my conviction a clinch!

First you deliver your phrase
  —Nothing propound that I see,
Fit in itself for much blame or much praise—
  Answered no less, where no answer needs be;
Off start the two on their ways.

Straight must a Third interpose,
  Volunteer needlessly help—
In strikes a Fourth, a Fifth thrusts in his nose,
  So the cry's open, the kennel's a-yelp,
Argument's hot to the close!

One dissertates, he is candid—
  Two must discept,—has distinguished!
Three helps the couple, if ever yet man did:
  Four protests, Five makes a dart at the thing wished—
Back to One, goes the case bandied!

One says his say with a difference—
  More of expounding, explaining!
All now is wrangle, abuse and vociferance—
  Now there's a truce all's subdued, self-restraining—
Five, though, stands out all the stiffer hence.

One is incisive, corrosive—
  Two retorts, nettled, curt, crepitant—
Three makes rejoinder, expansive, explosive—
  Four overbears them all, strident and
    strepitant—
Five . . . O Danaides, O Sieve!

Now, they ply axes and crowbars—
  Now, they prick pins at a tissue
Fine as a skein of the casuist Escobar's
  Worked on the bone of a lie. To what
    issue?
Where is our gain at the Two-bars?

Est fuga, volvitur rota!
  On we drift. Where looms the dim port?
One, Two, Three, Four, Five, contribute their
    quota—
  Something is gained, if one caught but the
    import—
Show it us, Hugues of Saxe-Gotha!

What with affirming, denying,
  Holding, risposting, subjoining,
All's like . . . it's like . . . for an instance I'm
    trying . . .
  There! See our roof, its gilt moulding and
    groining
Under those spider-webs lying!

So your fugue broadens and thickens,
  Greatens and deepens and lengthens,
Till one exclaims—"But where's music, the dickens?
  Blot ye the gold, while your spider-web strengthens,
Blacked to the stoutest of tickens?"

I for man's effort am zealous.
  Prove me such censure's unfounded!
Seems it surprising a lover grows jealous—
  Hopes 'twas for something his organ-pipes sounded,
Tiring three boys at the bellows?

Is it your moral of Life?
  Such a web, simple and subtle,
Weave we on earth here in impotent strife,
  Backward and forward each throwing his shuttle,
Death ending all with his knife?

Over our heads Truth and Nature—
  Still our life's zigzags and dodges,
Ins and outs, weaving a new legislature—
  God's gold just shining its last where that lodges,
Palled beneath Man's usurpature!

So we o'ershroud stars and roses,
  Cherub and trophy and garland.
Nothings grow something which quietly closes
  Heaven's earnest eye,—not a glimpse of the
    far land
Gets through our comments and glozes.

Ah, but traditions, inventions,
  (Say we and make up a visage)
So many men with such various intentions
  Down the past ages must know more than
    this age!
Leave the web all its dimensions!

Who thinks Hugues wrote for the deaf?
  Proved a mere mountain in labour?
Better submit—try again—what's the clef?
  'Faith, it's no trifle for pipe and for tabor—
Four flats—the minor in F.

Friend, your fugue taxes the finger.
  Learning it once, who would lose it?
Yet all the while a misgiving will linger—
  Truth's golden o'er us although we refuse it—
Nature, thro' dust-clouds we fling her!

Hugues! I advise *meâ pœnâ*
  (Counterpoint glares like a Gorgon)

Bid One, Two, Three, Four, Five, clear the arena!
Say the word, straight I unstop the Full-Organ,
Blare out the *mode Palestrina*.

While in the roof, if I'm right there—
. . . Lo, you, the wick in the socket!
Hallo, you sacristan, show us a light there!
Down it dips, gone like a rocket!
What, you want, do you, to come unawares,
Sweeping the church up for first morning-prayers,
And find a poor devil at end of his cares
At the foot of your rotten-planked rat-riddled stairs?
Do I carry the moon in my pocket?

Robert Browning.

The Æolian Harp

. . . AND that simplest lute,
Placed lengthways in the clasping casement, hark!
How by the desultory breeze caressed,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs

Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, its strings
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairyland,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing!
O! the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere—
Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so filled;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.
. . . And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of all?

S. T. Coleridge.

The Harp that Once through Tara's Halls

THE harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts, that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells ;
The chord alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives.

Thomas Moore.

The Organ

The Child Muses

I KNOW the Organ is a living thing :
He speaks on Sundays, when they sing,
And when the choristers intone ;
But all the week he stays alone,
And meditates with a patient mind
On the thoughts the people have left behind,
Thousands and thousands, in their breath,
Though the Church is empty, and still as death.

I should like to creep into the Church at night,
And visit him there, alone in his might,
When the Moon through the picture-window
gleams,
And paints the wonderful creature's dreams.

Sometimes when I sit and look at him,
My heart beats thick and the Church grows dim ;
He speaks ; I look at the pipes on his face,
And I think he will move, move, move from his
place ;
And I think the roof of the church will rise ;
The cold floor shakes with fear as it lies ;
My body seems to have lost its weight,
We all shall float, like clouds on the skies,
When the beautiful Organ comes marching
down,

And the Church will be larger than any town ;
For his voice is a lifting voice, and great,
The voice of a creature that moves on straight,
Like a driving light in an awful dream,
Or a ghostly ship on a ghostly stream.

William Brighty Rands.

The Minstrel

MEANWHILE from out its ebon case
His violin the minstrel drew,
And having tuned its strings anew,
Now held it close in his embrace,
And poising in his outstretched hand
The bow, like a magician's wand,
He paused, and said, with beaming face,
" Last night my story was too long ;
To-day I give you but a song,
An old tradition of the North ;
But first, to put you in the mood,
I will a little while prelude,
And from this instrument draw forth
Something by way of overture."

He played, at first the tones were pure
And tender as a summer night,
The full moon climbing to her height,
The sob and ripple of the seas,

The flapping of an idle sail ;
And then by sudden and sharp degrees
The multiplied, wild harmonies
Freshened and burst into a gale ;
A tempest howling through the dark,
A crash as of some shipwrecked bark,
A loud and melancholy wail.

Such was the prelude to the tale
Told by the minstrel ; and at times
He paused amid its varying rhymes,
And at each pause again broke in
The music of his violin,
With tones of sweetness or of fear.
Movements of trouble or of calm,
Creating their own atmosphere ;
As sitting in a church we hear
Between the verses of the psalm
The organ playing soft and clear,
Or thundering on the startled ear.

H. W. Longfellow.

The Minstrel Boy

THE Minstrel-boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him ;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.—

" Land of song ! " said the warrior-bard,
" Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee ! "

The Minstrel fell !—but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under ;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder ;
And said, " No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery !
Thy songs were made for the brave and free,
They shall never sound in slavery."

Thomas Moore.

Abt Vogler

(*After he has been extemporising upon the musical instrument of his invention.*)

WOULD that the structure brave, the manifold music I build,
Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when Solomon willed
Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,

Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and of aim,
Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep, removed,—
Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable Name,
And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the princess he loved!

Would it might tarry like this, the beautiful building of mine,
This which my keys in a crowd pressed and importuned to raise!
Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dispart now and now combine,
Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their master his praise!
And one would bury his brow with a blind plunge down to hell,
Burrow awhile and build, broad on the roots of things,
Then up again swim into sight, having based me my palace well,
Founded it, fearless of blame, flat on the nether springs.

And another would mount and march, like the excellent minion he was,
Ay, another, and yet another, one crowd but with many a crest,

Raising my rampired walls of gold as transparent as glass,
Eager to do and die, yield each his place to the rest:
For higher still and higher (as a runner tips with fire,
When a great illumination surprises a festal night—
Outlining round and round Rome's dome from space to spire)
Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was certain, to match man's birth,
Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I;
And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth,
As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky
Novel splendours burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with mine,
Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering star;
Meteor-moons, balls of blaze! and they did not pale nor pine,
For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far.

Nay more ; for there wanted not who walked
in the glare and glow,
Presences plain in the place ; or, fresh from
the Protoplast,
Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier
wind should blow,
Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their
liking at last ;
Or eke the wonderful Dead who have passed
through the body and gone,
But were back once more to breathe in an
old world worth their new,
What never had been, was now ; what was,
as it shall be anon ;
And what is,—shall I say, matched both ?
for I was made perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a
wish of my soul,
All through my soul that praised as its wish
flowed visibly forth,
All through music and me ! For think had I
painted the whole,
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process
wonder-worth :
Had I written the same, made verse, still,
effect proceeds from cause,
Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how
the tale is told ;

It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled :—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
Existed behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are !
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.
Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is nought ;
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said ;
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought ;
And, there ! Ye have heard and seen ; consider and bow the head !

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared ;
Gone ! and the good tears start, the praises that come too slow ;
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go.

Never to be again ! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance : is this your comfort to me ?
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God : ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable Name ?
Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands !
What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever the same ?
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that Thy power expands ?
There shall never be one lost good ! What was, shall live as before ;
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound ;
What was good, shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more ;
On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven, a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist ;
Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good, nor power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives
for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an
hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for
earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself
in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the
bard ;
Enough that He heard it once ; we shall hear
it by-and-by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's
evidence
For the fullness of the days? Have we
withered or agonized ?
Why eke was the pause prolonged but that
singing might issue thence ?
Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony
should be prized ?
Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to
clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the
weal and woe :
But God has a few of us whom He whispers in
the ear,
The rest may reason and welcome : 'tis we
musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her
reign:
I will be patient and proud, and soberly
acquiesce.
Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord
again,
Sliding by semitones, till I sink to the minor,
—yes,
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien
ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from
into the deep;
Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my
resting-place is found,
The C Major of this life: so, now I will try
to sleep.

Robert Browning.

IX

IN PRAISE OF MUSIC

PORTIA. . . . Music ! hark !

NERISSA. It is your music, madam, of the house.

PORTIA. Nothing is good, I see, without respect.
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

NERISSA. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

PORTIA. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended ; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection !—
Peace, ho ! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awak'd ! [*Music ceases.*]

William Shakespeare (" Merchant of Venice ").

Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak,
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd
And, as with living souls, have been informed
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.

John Dryden.

Praise of Music

WHEN whispering strains do softly steal
With creeping passion through the heart,
And when at ev'ry touch we feel
Our pulses beat and bear a part;
When threads can make
A heart-string quake,
Philosophy
Can scarce deny
The soul consists of harmony.

O lull me, lull me, charming air,
My sense is rock'd with wonder sweet!
Like snow on wool thy fallings are—
Soft like a spirit's are thy feet.
Grief who need fear
That hath an ear?
Down let him lie,
And slumb'ring die,
And change his soul for harmony.

William Strode.

On Hearing a Lady Play on the Musical Glasses

BEYOND expression, delicately fine,
Beneath her slender fingers swept the sound
Of 'witching tones, melodious divine;
Soothing and soft upon the sense they wound,
Join'd with the syren's music, as it were,
As her sweet voice came mingling on the ear.
Ah, who but knows what woman's voice can do!
To every soul such melody is dear;
Angelic harmony, and beauty too!
Our very hearts melt in the sounds we hear;
The breaks—the pauses—check our pulse's beats.
Enraptur'd memory still each air retains,—
And, as the mind the syren's song repeats,
Creates sensations sweeter than her strains.

John Clare.

"The Musick of the Spheres"

It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is musick even in the beauty and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a musick wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain "the musick of the spheres"; for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony, which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-musick. For myself, not only from my Catholick obedience, but my particular genius, I am obliged to embrace it; for even that vulgar and tavern-musick, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of my Maker. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and the creatures of God,—such a melody to the ear, as the whole world well

understood would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ear of God. It unties the ligaments of my frame, takes me to pieces, dilates me out of myself, and by degrees methinks resolves me into heaven.

Sir Thomas Browne ("Religio Medici," 1642).

Music's Empire

FIRST was the world as one great cymbal made
Where jarring winds to infant nature played:
All music was a solitary sound
To hollow rocks and murmuring fountains bound.
Tubal first made the wilder notes agree,
And Tubal tunéd Music's jubilee;
He called the echoes from their sullen cell,
And built the organ's city, where they dwell;
Each sought a consort in that lovely place,
And virgin trebles wed the manly bass;
From whence the progeny of numbers new
Into harmonious colonies withdrew;
Some to the lute, some to the viol went,
And others chose the cornet eloquent;
These practising the wind, and those the wire,
To sing man's triumphs, or in Heaven's choir.

Then Music, the mosaic of the air,
Did all of these a solemn noise prepare,
With which she gained the Empire of the ear,
Including all between the earth and sphere.
Victorious sounds! yet here your homage do
Unto a gentler conqueror than you;
Who, though he flies the music of his praise,
Would with you Heaven's Hallelujahs raise.

Andrew Marvell.

Inward Harmony

MUSICAL: how much lies in that! A *musical* thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inmost heart of the thing; detected the inmost mystery of it, namely, the *melody* that lies hidden in it; the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists, and has a right to be, here in this world. All inmost things, we may say, are melodious; naturally utter themselves in Song. The meaning of Song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that.

Nay all speech, even the commonest speech, has something of song in it: not a parish in the

world but has its parish-accent;—the rhythm or *tune* to which the people there *sing* what they have to say! Accent is a kind of chanting; all men have accent of their own—though they only *notice* that of others. Observe too how all passionate language does of itself become musical,—with a finer music than the mere accent; the speech of a man even in zealous anger becomes a chant, a song. All deep things are Song. It seems somehow the very central of us, Song; as if all the rest were but wrappages and hulls! The primal element of us; of us, and of all things. The Greeks fabled of Sphere-Harmonies; it was the feeling they had of the inner structure of Nature; that the soul of all her voices and utterances was perfect music. Poetry, therefore, we will call *Musical Thought.* The Poet is he who *thinks* in that manner. At bottom, it turns still on power of intellect; it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a Poet. See deep enough, and you see musically; the heart of Nature *being* everywhere music, if you can only reach it.

Thomas Carlyle.

Music Studies

THE interim . . . may both with profit and delight be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music heard or learned; either whilst the skilful organist plies his grave and fancied descant in lofty fugues, or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer; sometimes the lute or soft organ stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civil ditties; which if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustic harshness and distempered passions. The like also would not be unexpedient after meat, to assist and cherish Nature in her first concoction, and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction.

John Milton (Of Education).

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Earthly Harmonies

. . . And I apprehend, though I am not endowed with an ear to seize those earthly harmonies, which to some devout souls have seemed, as it were, the broken echoes of the heavenly choir—I apprehend that there is a law in music, disobedience whereunto would bring us in our singing to the level of shrieking maniacs or howling beasts: so that herein we are well instructed how true liberty can be nought but the transfer of obedience from the will of one or of a few men to that will which is the norm or rule for all men. And though the transfer may sometimes be but an erroneous direction of search, yet is the search good and necessary to the ultimate finding. And even as in music, where all obey and concur to one end, so that each has the joy of contributing to a whole whereby he is ravished and lifted up into the courts of heaven, so will it be in that crowning time of the millennial reign, when our daily prayer will be fulfilled, and one law shall be written on all hearts, and be the very structure of all thought, and be the principle of all action.

George Eliot.

Music: The Speech of Angels

Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite; we look for moments, across the cloudy elements, into the Eternal Sea of Sight, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of Nature, have prized song and music as the highest, as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine.

Reader, it was actually so in Greek, in Rome, in Moslem, Christian, most of all in Old-Hebrew times; and if you look how it now is, you will find a change that should astonish you.

To "sing the praise of God," that you will find, if you can interpret old words, and see what new things they mean, was, and always will be, the business of the singer. He who forsakes that business, and, wasting our divinest gifts, sing the praise of Chaos, what shall we say of him!

David, King of Judah, a soul inspired by divine music and much other heroism, was

wont to pour himself in song; he, with seer's eye and heart, discerned the God-like amid the Human; struck tones that were an echo of the sphere-harmonies, and are still felt to be such. Reader, art thou one of a thousand, able still to *read* a Psalm of David, and catch some echo of it through the old dim centuries: feeling far off, in thy own heart, what it once was to other hearts made as thine? To sing it attempt not, for it is impossible in this late time; only know that it once was sung. Then go to the Opera, and hear, with unspeakable reflections, what things men now sing.

Thomas Carlyle.

The Power of Harmony

MUSIC is of the universe the soul,
  Pervading and controlling all that is;
The fount of all and of all things the goal
  In which all contraries converge and kiss:
The spheres in answer to its touch vibrate,
  And through void space its harmonies resound,
Making a mighty symphony elate
  With chords which Nature's deepest truths expound:

Its energy awakes all things to life,
And makes even while it seems to break all laws:
Seems, yet but seems, to set all things at strife,
And is at once no less effect than cause:
Were once the mighty harmony to cease,
Farewell to order, measure, rule and peace.

Bertram Dobell.

The Passions

An Ode for Music

WHEN Music, heavenly Maid, was young
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, raised, refined:
'Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound,

And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for Madness ruled the hour,
Would prove his own expressive power.

First, Fear, his hand its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret strings ;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woeful measures wan Despair—
Low sullen sounds his grief beguiled,
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure ?
Still it whisper'd promised pleasure
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail !
Still would her touch the strain prolong ;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale
She call'd on echo still through all the song
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,

A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung ;—but with a frown
Revenge impatient rose ;
He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down,
And with a withering look
The war denouncing trumpet took
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe !
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat ;
And, though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd :
Sad proof of thy distressful state !
Of differing themes the reeling song was mix'd ;
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired;
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And dashing soft from rocks around
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how alter'd was its sprightlier tone
When Cheerfulness a Nymph of healthiest hues
Her bow across her shoulder slung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crown'd Sisters and their chaste-eyed Queen
Satyrs and Sylvan Boys were seen
Peeping from forth their alley green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leap'd up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest:
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best.
They would have thought who heard the strain
They saw, in Tempe vale, her native maids
Amidst the festal sounding shades
To some unwearied minstrel dancing
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round,
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended Maid,
Friend of pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess, why to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As in that loved Athenian bower
You learn'd an all commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O nymph endear'd!
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!

Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
Fill thy recording Sister's page ;—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age,
E'en all at once together found
Cecilia's mingl'd world of sound :—
O bid our vain endeavours cease :
Revive the just designs of Greece :
Return in all thy simplest state !
Confirm the tales her sons relate !

William Collins.

Music as a Remedy for Melancholy

MANY and sundry are the means which philosophers and physicians have prescribed to exhilarate a sorrowful heart, to divert those fixed and intent cares and meditations, which in this malady so much offend ; but in my judgment none so present, none so powerful, none so apposite as a cup of strong drink, mirth, music, and merry company. " Wine and music rejoice the heart." Jacchinus calls it " a most admirable thing, and worthy of consideration, that

can so mollify the mind, and stay those tempestuous affections of it." Music is a roaring-meg against melancholy, to rear and revive the languishing soul; "affecting not only the ears, but the very arteries, the vital, and animal spirits, it erects the mind, and makes it nimble." This it will effect in the most dull, severe, and sorrowful souls, "expel grief with mirth, and if there be any clouds, dust or dregs of cares yet lurking in our thoughts, most powerfully it wipes them all away," and that which is more, it will perform all this in an instant. "Cheer up the countenance, expel austerity, bring in hilarity, inform manners, mitigate anger"; Athenæus calleth it an infinite treasure to such as are endowed with it. Cassidorus reckons up of this our divine music, not only to expel the greatest griefs, but "it doth extenuate fears and furies, appeaseth cruelty, abateth heaviness, and to such as are watchful it causeth quiet rest; it takes away spleen and hatred," be it instrumental, vocal, with strings, wind, it cures all irksomeness and heaviness of the soul. Labouring men that sing to their work can tell us much, and so can soldiers when they go to fight, whom terror of death cannot so much affright, as the sound of trumpet, drum, fife, and such like music animates. It makes a child quiet, the nurse's

song, and many times the sound of a trumpét on a sudden, bells ringing, a carman's whistle, a boy singing some ballad tune early in the street, alters, revives, recreates a restless patient that cannot sleep in the night. In a word, it is so powerful a thing that it ravisheth the soul, the queen of the senses, by sweet pleasure (which is a happy cure), and corporal pacify our incorporal soul, and carries it beyond itself, helps, elevates, extends it. Scaliger gives a reason for these effects, "because the spirits about the heart take in that trembling and dancing air into the body, are moved together, and stirred up with it," or else the mind, as some suppose harmonically composed, is roused up at the tunes of music. And 'tis not only men that are so affected, but almost all other creatures. You know the tale of Hercules Gallus, Orpheus, and Amphion, that could make stocks and stones, as well as beasts and other animals, dance after their pipes: the dog and hare, wolf and lamb, stood all gaping upon Orpheus; and trees pulled up by the roots came to hear him.

Arion made fishes follow him, which, as common experience evinceth, are much affected with music. All singing birds are much pleased with it, especially nightingales, if we may believe Calcagninus; and bees amongst the

rest, though they be flying away, when they hear any tingling sound, will tarry behind. Harts, hinds, horses, dogs, bears are exceedingly delighted with it. Elephants, Agrippa adds, and in Lydia in the midst of a lake there be certain floating islands (if ye will believe it), that after music will dance.

But to leave all declamatory speeches in praise of divine music, I will confine myself to my proper subject: besides that excellent power it hath to expel many other diseases, it is a sovereign remedy against despair and melancholy, and will drive away the devil himself. Canus, a Rhodian fiddler, when Apollonius was inquisitive to know what he could do with his pipe, told him, "that he would make a melancholy man merry, and him that was merry much merrier than before, a lover more enamoured, a religious man more devout." Ismenias the Theban, Chyron the Centur is said to have cured this and many other diseases by music alone: as now they do those, saith Bodine, that are troubled with St. Vitus bedlam dance. Timotheus the musician compelled Alexander to skip up and down and leave his dinner (like the tale of the Friar and the Boy) whom Austin so much commends for it. Who hath not heard how David's harmony drove away the evil spirits from King Saul,

and Elisha, when he was troubled by importunate kings, called for a minstrel, and "when he played the hand of the Lord came upon him." Jason Pratensis hath many examples, how Clinias and Empedocles cured some desperately melancholy and some mad, by this one music. Which because it hath such excellent virtues, belike Homer brings in Phemius playing, and the Muses singing at the banquet of the gods. Aristotle highly approved of it, and so do all Politicians. The Greeks, Romans, have graced Music, and made it one of the liberal sciences, though it be now become mercenary. All civil commonwealths allow it: Cneius Manlius (as Livius relates) brought first out of Asia to Rome singing wenches, players, jesters, and all kinds of music to their feasts. Your Princes, Emperors, and persons of any quality maintain it in their Courts; No mirth without music. Sir Thomas More in his absolute Utopian commonwealth, allows music as an appendix to every meal, and that throughout, to all sorts. Epictetus calls a table without music, a manger, for "the consent of Musicians at a banquet, is a carbuncle set in gold, and as the signet of an emerald well-trimmed with gold, so is the melody of music in a pleasant banquet." Lewis the eleventh when he invited Edward the fourth to come to Paris, told him that as a

principal part of his entertainment, he should hear sweet voices of children, Ionic and Lydian tunes, exquisite Music. Lucian is not ashamed to confess that he took infinite delight in singing, dancing, music, woman's company, and such like pleasures, " and if thou," saith he, " didst but hear them play and dance, I know thou wouldst be so well pleased with the object, that thou wouldst dance for company thyself, without doubt thou wilt be taken with it." So Scaliger ingeniously confesseth, " I am beyond all measure affected with music, I do most willingly behold them dance, I am mightily detained and allured with the grace and comeliness of fair women, I am well pleased to be idle among them." And what young man is not ? As it is acceptable and conducing to most, so especially to a melancholy man. Provided always, his disease proceed not originally from it, that he be not some light *inamorato*, some idle fantastic, who capers in conceit all day long, and thinks of nothing else, but how to make jigs, sonnets, madrigals, in commendation of his mistress. In such cases Music is most pernicious, as a spur to a free horse, and will make him run himself blind, or break his wind; for music enchants, as Menander holds, it will make such melancholy people mad, and the sound of these jigs and hornpipes will not be removed

out of the ears a week after. Plato for this reason forbids Music and wine to all young men, because they are most part amorous, lest one fire increaseth another. Many men are melancholy by hearing Music, but it is a pleasing melancholy that it causeth, and therefore to such as are discontent, in woe, fear, sorrow, or dejected, it is a most present remedy, it expels cares, alters their grieved minds, and easeth in an instant. Otherwise, saith Plutarch, music makes some men mad as a tiger; like Astolphos' horn in Ariosto: or Mercury's golden wand in Homer, that made some wake, others sleep; it hath diverse effects: and Theophrastus right well prophesied, that diseases were either procured by Music, or mitigated.

Robert Burton ("Anatomy of Melancholy").

Music and Virtue

Not indeed by degree to degree, yet in essential relation (as of winds to waves, the one being always the true cause of the other, though they are not necessarily of equal force at the same time), we shall find vice in its varieties, with art-failure,—and virtue in its varieties, with art-success,—fall and rise together. The peasant girl's song at her spinning wheel, the peasant

labourer's "to the oaks and rills"—domestic music, feebly yet sensitively skilful—music for the multitude, of beneficent or of traitorous power—dance melodies pure and orderly, or foul and frantic—march music, blatant in mere fever of animal pugnacity or majestic with force of national duty and memory—song music, reckless, sensual, sickly, slovenly, forgetful even of the foolish words it effaces with foolish noise, or thoughtful, sacred, healthful, artful, for ever sanctifying noble thought with separately distinguished loveliness of belonging sound—all these families and gradations of good or evil, however mingled, follow, in so far as they are good, one constant law of virtue (or "life-strength," which is the literal meaning of the word, and its intended one in wise men's mouths), and in so far as they are evil, are evil by outlawry and unvirtue, or death-weakness. Then, passing wholly beyond the domain of death, we may still imagine the ascendant nobleness of the art, through all the concordant life of incorrupt creatures, and a continually deeper harmony of "puissant words and murmurs made to bless," until we reach "the undisturbed song of pure concert aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne."

John Ruskin ("Queen of the Air").

X

PIANO MUSIC

INVOCATION TO MUSIC

When o'er the keys my fingers stray
In search of tones to lull my care,
I feel my sadness melt away
As clouds dissolve in summer air.
O Music, sent to soothe and bless,
Vouchsafe me thy divine caress!

Come fold me in thy soft embrace,
And waft my spirit into bliss!
With tenderness my cares efface,
As by the touch of mother's kiss.
O Music, sent to soothe and bless,
Vouchsafe me thy divine caress!

Mary Cowden Clarke.

The Spinet

My heart's an old Spinet with strings
To laughter chiefly tuned, but some
That Fate has practised hard on, dumb,
They answer not whoever sings.
The ghosts of half-forgotten things
Will touch the keys with fingers numb,
The little mocking spirits come
And thrill it with their fairy wings.

A jingling harmony it wakes
My heart, my lyre, my old Spinet,
And now a memory it wakes,
And now the music means "forget,"
And little heed the player takes
Howe'er the thoughtful critic fret.

Andrew Lang.

The Harpsichord and the Pianoforte

I find there is no end of waiting here in town for the great and long uninterrupted mornings of the country. I therefore snatch my pen in a passion, and resolve to keep scrawling something to you, with or without thought,

sense, or nonsense, as it happens. It requires no thought to thank you heartily, in the first place, for all the trouble you have so kindly taken about my pianoforte.[1] It arrived safe at the proper time, without being even much put out of tune by the jumble. I am much pleased with the tone of it, which is sweet and even; in the pianissimo it is charming. Altogether the instrument is delightful, and I play upon it *con amore*, and with the pleasure I expected. If it has defects which a good harpsichord has not, it has beauties and delicacies which amply compensate, and which make the harpsichord wonderfully flashy and insipid when played after it; though for some purposes, and in some of my musical moods, though not the best, I confess, I might turn to the harpsichord in preference. There are times when one's ear calls only for harmony, and a pleasant jingle; when one is disposed to merely sensual music, that tickles the auditory nerves, and does not disturb the indolence of our feelings or imagination. But as soon as ever my spirit wakes, as soon as my heart-strings catch the gentlest vibration, I swivel me round incontinently to the pianoforte (1774).

Rev. Thomas Twining.

[1] The first piano used in England was in a performance of the Beggar's Opera, at Covent Garden, 1767.

Piano Music

Son joyeux, importun d'un clavecin sonore.
Petrus Borel.

A BLURRED light glimmers from each mellow key
Save where her hand caresses, and the air
Is tremulous with music faintly stirred
As by the passing of a soft-winged bird ;
And the grey room is censed with perfume rare,
Odorous of her frail divinity.

What may this be—this sudden sense of peace
Rocking the soul, which hath so little ease ?
What part have I with thee, most gentle strain—
I, with the trifle of a hush'd refrain,
That wanders to the window, opening on
The pale flowers of the garden—and is gone ?

Paul Verlaine.

(Translated by Chas. de Boismaison.)

To Miss C.

(*On hearing her play on the harpsichord*)

HAD Israel's Monarch, when misfortune's dart
Pierced in its deepest core his heaving breast,
Heard but thy dulcet tones, his sorrowing heart
At such soft tones had soothed itself to rest.

Yes, sweeter far than Jesse's son's thy strains—
  Yet what avail if sorrow they disarm ?
Love's sharper sting within the soul remains,
  The melting movements wound us as they
    charm.

Thomas Chatterton.

To Miss Guschl

Dear Barbara, thy fingers fleet and fine,
  That skim the keys like sea-bird hovering,
  Light pois'd and air-borne on the level wing,
Pour out their music, touch'd with gift divine,
In memory's echo, to this brain of mine ;
  And visionary strains they often sing
  Melodiously within me, murmuring
A faint delicious descant, soft, benign.
Endowments such as thine have double power :
  To charm the senses with their present spell ;
  And soothe, when absent, with remembered
    knell
Of sounds that lived in richly plenteous shower,
  Struck by the hand of masterfullest skill ;
  Now sweet and low, now strong and firm as
    will.

Mary Cowden Clarke.

The Lover of Music to his Pianoforte

Oh, friend, whom glad or grave we seek,
  Heav'n-holding shrine!
I ope thee, touch thee, hear thee speak,
  And peace is mine.
No fairy casket, full of bliss,
  Outvalues thee;
Love only, waken'd with a kiss,
  More sweet may be.

To thee, when our full hearts o'erflow
  In griefs or joys,
Unspeakable emotions owe
  A fitting voice:
Mirth flies to thee, and Love's unrest,
  And Memory dear,
And Sorrow with his tighten'd breast,
  Comes for a tear.

Oh, since few joys of human mould
  Thus wait us still,
Thrice bless'd be thine, thou gentle fold
  Of peace at will.

No change, no sullenness, no cheat,
In thee we find;
Thy saddest voice is ever sweet,—
Thine answer kind.

Leigh Hunt.

XI

SOME MUSIC MAKERS

But many days have passed since last my heart
Was warmed luxuriously by divine Mozart:
By Arne delighted, or by Handel maddened;
Or by the song of Erin pierced and saddened:
What time you were before the music sitting,
And the rich notes to each sensation fitting.

John Keats.

TO MR. H. LAWES ON HIS AIRS

Harry! whose tuneful and well-measured song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;
To after age then shalt be writ the man
That with smooth air could'st humour best our tongue.
Thou honourest verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
That tunest their happiest lines in hymn or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

John Milton.

On the Death of Mr. Purcell

MARK how the lark and linnet sing;
With rival notes
They strain their warbling throats,
To welcome in the spring.
But in the close of night,
When Philomel begins her heavenly lay,
They cease their mutual spite,
Drink in her music with delight
And, listening, silently obey.

So ceased the rival crew, when Purcell came,
They sang no more, or only sung his fame:
Struck dumb, they all admired the godlike man:
Alas! too soon retired
As he too late began,
We beg not hell our Orpheus to restore:
Had he been there,
Their sovereign's fear
Had sent him back before.
The power of harmony too well they knew,
He long ere this had tuned their jarring sphere,
And left no hell below.

The heavenly choir, who heard his notes from high,
Let down the scale of music from the sky:
They handed him along,
And all the way he taught, and all the way they sung.
Ye brethren of the lyre, and tuneful voice,
Lament his lot; but at your own rejoice:
Now live secure, and linger out your days;
The gods are pleased alone with Purcell's lays,
Nor know to mend their choice.

John Dryden.

To Mr. Lawrence

LAWRENCE! of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.

What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

John Milton.

To Edward Filmer,
on his musical work, dedicated to the Queen

WHAT charming peals are these,
That, while they bind the senses, do so please?
They are the marriage rites
Of two, the choicest pair of man's delights,
Music and Poesy;
French air, and English verse here wedded lie.

Who did this knot compose,
Again hath brought the Lily to the Rose;
And with their chainèd dance,
Re-celebrates the joyful match with France.
They are a school to win
The fair French daughter to learn English in;
And, gracèd with her song,
To make the language sweet upon her tongue.

Ben Jonson.

Mozart and Wagner

Th' old masters' music captivates the sense
With all-pervading and persuading power,
We listen ever with delight intense
And drink it in as drinks the dew the flower:
The hours go by and still we sit entranced,
And rise at last unwearied and unsated,
Our joy of life rekindled or enhanced;
In spirit and in senses recreated.

But Wagner, like a rushing whirlwind, storms us,
And, despot-like, submission doth demand:
Perchance to faithful subjects he transforms us—
Yet some so rude a summons will withstand;
Though with the demi-gods he must be classed
His genius wearies and exhausts at last.

Bertram Dobell.

To Richard Wagner

Master and chief of all for whom the singers
Strain with full bosoms and ecstatic throats,
For whom the strings beneath the flying fingers,
The clear pipes and the viols yield their notes,—

Lord over all for whom the trumpets thunder,
For whom the harps throb like the distant sea,
For whom the shrill sweet flutings cleave in sunder
The surges of the strings that meet and flee,—

O strong sweet soul, whose life is as a mountain
Hymned round about with stress of spirit choirs,
Whose mighty song leaps sunward like a fountain,
Reaching for lightnings from celestial fires,—

O burning heart and tender, highest, mildest,
Nightingale-throated, with the eagle's wing,—
This sheaf of songs, culled where the ways are wildest
And the shade deepest, to thy feet I bring!

I hail thee as from many hearts that cherish,
Serve, and keep white thy thought within their shrines,
Where the flame fades not, though its lustre perish,
Midmost the lurid and the stormy signs.

I greet thee as from those great mates departed[1]
Who first taught Song to know the ways of Soul
Fit harbingers of thee, the eagle-hearted
Saw in the art the new sun-planets roll.

I greet thee with a promise and a cheering—
I, that have loved thee many weary years,
I, that with eyes strained for the dawn's appearing,
Have clung to thee for hope and healing tears;

I, that am nought, whose weakling voice has in it
The shrill sole sadness of one wailing note;
No nightingale I, but a sad-voiced linnet,
Piping thin ditties from a bleeding throat;

I—since the masters lift no voice to-thee-ward
To stay thy battle in the weary time—
Send forth for thee those weak-winged songs to seaward,
To bear to thee their freight of idle rhyme.

Ah, how weak-voiced and little worth, my master!
Yet haply—as a lark-song on the breeze,
That winging through the air, black with disaster,
Heartens some exile pacing by the seas,

[1] Gluck, Schumann, Hector Berlioz.

So even mine, my weak and unskilled singing,
May smite thine ear with no unpleasing notes.
What time the shrill sounds of the fight are ringing
About thee, and the clamour of dull throats.

And peradventure (for least lore is grateful)
The humble song may, for a little while,
Smooth from thy brow the sadness high and fateful,
Call to thy lips the rare and tender smile.

My harmonies are harmonies of sadness,
My light is but as starlight on the wane:
Far nobler bards shall cheer thee with their gladness;
I bring thee but the songpulse of my pain.

Be not disheartened, O our Zoroaster,
O mage of our new music-world of fire!
Thou art not all unfriended, O my master!
Let not the great heart fail thee for desire.

What matter though the storm-wind round thee rages,
Though men judge weakly with imperfect sight!
O master-singer of the heroic ages,
Each dawn is brighter with the appointed light.

Hate's echoes on the inconstant air but languish,
Win not within the world's true heart to be,—
Faint wails for us of far-off souls in anguish,
That chide their own sick selves in all they see.

Thine is the Future—hardly theirs the Present,
The flowerless days that put forth leaf and die—
Theirs that lie steeped in idle days and pleasant,
Setting the pageant of the years pass by.

For the days hasten when all shall adore thee,
All at thy spring shall drink, and know it sweet;
All the false temples shall fall down before thee,
Ay—and the false gods crumble at thy feet.

Then shall men set thee in their holy places,
Hymn thee with anthems of remembering,
Faiths shall spring up and blossom in thy traces,
Thick as the violets cluster round the spring.

And then, perchance, when in the brighter ages
Men shall awake and know the god they scorned,
And, mad with grief, grave upon marble pages
(That therewithal the Future may be warned)

The tale of their remorse and shame undying,
They, coming where thy name has kept these sweet—
These idle songs of mine—shall set with sighing
My name upon the marble at thy feet.

For that, when all made mock of and denied thee,
Seeing not the portent and the fiery sword,
I from my dream in the mid-heaven descried thee,
Saw and confessed thee, knew and named thee Lord.

John Payne.

XII

MR. PEPYS ON MUSIC

TO MUSICK. A SONG

Musick, thou Queen of Heaven, care-charming spel,
That strik'st a stillnesse into hell;
Thou that tam'st tygers, and fierce storms (that rise)
With thy soule-melting lullabies:
Fall down, down, down, from those thy chiming spheres,
To charme our soules, as thou enchant'st our eares.

Robert Herrick.

Wind-Musique – played by S. P.

WITH my wife to the King's House to see "The Virgin Martyr," the first time it hath been acted a great while; and it is mighty pleasant; not that the play is worth much, but it is finely acted by Beck Marshall. But that which did please me beyond anything in the whole world, was the wind-musique when the angel comes down; which is so sweet that it ravished me, and indeed, in a word, did wrap up my soul so that it made me really sick, just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife; that neither then, nor all the evening going home, and at home, I was able to think of any thing, but remained all night transported, so as I could not believe that ever any musique hath that real command over the soul of a man as this did upon me; and makes me resolve to practise wind-musique, and to make my wife do the like.

Diary (Feb. 27, 1667–8).

A Poor Concert

To White Hall; and there in the Boarded Gallery did hear the musick with which the King is presented this night by Monsieur Grebus, the Master of his Musick both instrumental (I think twenty-four violins) and vocall: an English song upon Peace. But, God forgive me! I was never so little pleased with a concert of musick in my life. The manner of setting words and repeating them out of order, and that with a number of voices, makes me sick, the whole design of vocall musick being lost by it. Here was a great press of people, but I did not see many pleased with it, only the instrumental musick he had brought by practice to play very just.

Diary (Oct. 1, 1667).

The Arched Viall

To the Musique meeting at the Post office, where I was once before. And thither anon come all the Greshem College, and a great deal of noble company: and the new instru-

ment was brought called the Arched Viall, where being tuned with lute-strings, and played on with keys like an organ, a piece of parchment is always kept moving ; and the strings, which by the keys are pressed down upon it, are grated in imitation of a bow, by the parchment ; and so it is intended to resemble several vyalls played on with one bow, but so basely and so harshly, that it will never do. But after three hours' stay it could not be fixed in tune : and so they were fain to go to some other musique of instruments. *Diary* (Oct. 5, 1664).

Vibrations

Discoursed with Mr. Hooke about the nature of sounds, and he did make me understand the nature of musicall sounds made by strings, mighty prettily ; and told me that having come to a certain number of vibrations proper to make any tone, he is able to tell how many strokes a fly makes with her wings (those flies that hum in their flying), by the note that it answers to in musique, during their flying. That, I suppose, is a little too much refined ; but his discourse, in general, of sound was mighty fine. *Diary* (Aug. 8, 1666).

Italian Singing

So I to White Hall, and there all the evening on the Queene's side; and it being a most summer-like day, and a fine warm evening, the Italians came in a barge under the leads before the Queene's drawing-room; and so the Queene and ladies went out and heard them for almost an hour: and the singing was indeed very good altogether; but yet there was but one voice that alone did appear considerable, and that was Signior Joanni.

Diary (Sept. 28, 1668).

Italian Musique

He [T. Killigrew] tells me that he hath gone several times, eight or ten times, he tells me, hence to Rome, to hear good musique; so much he loves it, though he never did sing or play a note. That he hath ever endeavoured in the late king's time, and in this, to introduce good musique, but he never could do it, there never having been any musique here better than ballads. And says, "Hermit poore" and

"Chiny Chese"[1] was all the musique we had; and yet no ordinary fiddlers get so much money as our's do here, which speaks our rudenesse still. That he hath gathered our Italians from several Courts in Christendome, to come to make a concert for the king, which he do give £200 a-year a-piece to: but badly paid, and do come in the room of keeping four ridiculous gundilows,[2] he having got the king to put them away, and lay out money in this way; and indeed I do commend him for it, for I think it is a very noble undertaking. He do intend to have some times of the year these operas to be performed at the two present theatres, since he is defeated in what he intended in Moorfields or purpose for it; and he tells me plainly that the City audience was as good as the Court, but now they are most gone. Baptisa tells me that Giacomo Charissimi is still alive at Rome, who was master to Vinnecotio, who is one of the Italians that the king hath here, and the chief composer of them. My great wonder is, how this man do to keep in memory so perfectly the musique of the whole act, both for the voice and the instrument too. I confess I do admire it; but in recitative the sense much helps him, for there is but one

[1] Chevy Chase.
[2] Gondolas.

proper way of discoursing and giving the accents. Having done our discourse, we all took coaches, my Lord's and T. Killigrew's, and to Mrs. Knipp's Chamber, where this Italian is to teach her to sing her part. And so we all thither, and there she did sing an Italian song or two very fine, while he played the bass upon the harpsicon there; and exceedingly taken I am with her singing, and believe that she will do miracles at that and acting. Her little girl is mighty pretty and witty.

Diary (Feb. 12, 1666–7).

XIII

STREET HARMONIES

THE BARREL-ORGAN

. . . A BARREL-ORGAN began to sing, languishingly and melancholy, under my window. It played in the long alley of poplars, whose leaves seem mournful to me even in spring, since Maria passed that way with the tapers, for the last time. Yes, sad people's instrument, truly : the piano glitters, the violin brings one's torn fibres to the light, but the barrel-organ, in the twilight of memory, has set me despairingly dreaming. While it murmured a gaily vulgar air, such as puts mirth into the heart of the suburbs, an old-fashioned, an empty air, how came it that its refrain went to my very soul, and made me weep like a romantic ballad ? I drank it in, and I did not throw a penny out of the window, for fear of disturbing my own impression, and of perceiving that the instrument was not singing by itself.

Arthur Symons (after Stéphane Mallarmé).

A Piper

A PIPER in the streets to-day
Set up, and tuned, and started to play,
And away, away, away on the tide
Of his music we started; on every side
Doors and windows were opened wide,
And men left down their work and came,
And women with petticoats coloured like flame,
And little bare feet that were blue with cold,
Went dancing back to the age of gold,
And all the world went gay, went gay,
For half an hour in the street to-day.

Seumas O'Sullivan.

A Burlesque Musician

Nugæque canore.—Hor.

THERE is scarce a Man living who is not actuated by Ambition. When this Principle meets with an honest Mind and great Abilities, it does infinite Service to the World; on the contrary, when a Man only thinks of distinguishing himself, without being thus qualified for it, he becomes a very pernicious or very

ridiculous Creature. I shall here confine myself to that petty kind of Ambition, by which some Men grow eminent for odd Accomplishments and trivial Performances. How many are there whose whole Reputation depends upon a Punn or a Quibble? You may often see an Artist in the Streets gain a Circle of Admirers, by carrying a long Pole upon his Chin or Forehead in a perpendicular Posture. Ambition has taught some to write with their Feet, and others to walk upon their Hands. Some *tumble* into Fame, others grow immortal by throwing themselves through a Hoop.

> *Cætera de genere hoc adeo sunt multo loquacem*
> *Delassare valent Fabium——*

I am led into this Train of Thought by an Adventure I lately met with.

I was the other Day at a Tavern, where the Master of the House accommodating us himself with every thing we wanted, I accidentally fell into a Discourse with him; and talking of a certain great Man, who shall be nameless, he told me, That he had sometimes the Honour *to treat him with a Whistle*; (adding by the Way of Parenthesis) *For you must know, Gentlemen, that I whistle the best of any Man in* Europe. This naturally put me upon desiring him to give us a Sample of his Art; upon

which he called for a Case-Knife, and applying the Edge of it to his Mouth, converted it into a musical Instrument, and entertained me with an *Italian* Solo. Upon laying down the Knife, he took up a Pair of clean Tobacco Pipes; and after having slid the small End of them over the Table in a most melodious Trill, he fetched a Tune out of them, whistling to them at the same time in Consort. In short, the Tobacco-Pipes became *Musical Pipes* in the Hands of our Virtuoso; who confessed to me ingenuously, he had broke such Quantities of them, that he had almost broke himself, before he had brought this Piece of Musick to any tolerable Perfection. I then told him I would bring a Company of Friends to dine with him the next Week, as an Encouragement to his Ingenuity; upon which he thanked me, saying, That he would provide himself with a new Frying-Pan against that Day. I replied, That it was no matter; Roast and Boiled would serve our Turn. He smiled at my Simplicity, and told me, That it was his Design to give us a Tune upon it. As I was surprised at such a Promise, he sent for an old Frying-Pan, and grating it upon the Board, whistled to it in such a melodious Manner, that you could scarce distinguish it from a Base-Viol. He then took his Seat with us at the Table, and hearing my Friend that was with me humm over

a Tune to himself, he told him if he would sing out he would accompany his Voice with a Tobacco-Pipe. As my Friend has an agreeable Base, he chose rather to sing to the Frying-Pan; and indeed between them they made up a most extraordinary Consort. Finding our Landlord so great a Proficient in Kitchen-Musick, I asked him if he was Master of the Tongs and Key. He told Me that he had laid it down some Years since, as a little unfashionable: but that if I pleased he would give me a Lesson upon the Gridiron. He then informed me that he had added two Bars to the Gridiron, in order to give it a greater Compass of Sound; and I perceived was as well pleased with the Invention, as *Sappho* could have been upon adding two Strings to the Lute. To be short, I found that his whole Kitchen was furnished with musical Instruments; and could not but look upon this Artist as a kind of Burlesque Musician.

He afterwards of his own Accord fell into the Imitation of several Singing-Birds. My Friend and I toasted our Mistresses to the Nightingale, when all of a sudden we were surpriz'd with the Musick of the Thrush. He next proceeded to the Sky-Lark, mounting up by a proper Scale of Notes, and afterwards falling to the Ground with a very easy and regular Descent. He then contracted his Whistle to the Voice of several Birds

of the smallest Size. As he is a Man of a larger Bulk and higher Stature than ordinary, you would fancy him a Giant when you look'd upon him, and a Tom Tit when you shut your Eyes. I must not omit acquainting my Reader, that this accomplished Person was formerly the Master of a Toy-shop near *Temple-Bar;* and that the famous *Charles Mathers* was bred up under him. I am told that the Misfortunes which he has met with in the World, are chiefly owing to his great Application to his Musick; and therefore cannot but recommend him to my Readers as one who deserves their Favour, and may afford them great Diversion over a Bottle of Wine, which he sells at the Queen's Arms, near the End of the little Piazza in *Covent-Garden.*

The Spectator.

Power of Music

An Orpheus! an Orpheus! yes, Faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old;—
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him?

What an eager assembly! what an empire is this!
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss;
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest;
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer opprest.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light;
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,
And the pale-visaged Bakers, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—
What matter! he's caught—and his time runs to waste;
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret;

And the half-breathless Lamplighter—he's in
the net!

The Porter sits down on the weight which he
bore;
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her
store;—
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease,
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees!

He stands back by the wall;—he abates not
his din,
His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in
From the old and the young, from the poorest;
and there!
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful
a band;
I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with
a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight;
Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh,
not he!
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch; like a tower
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour!—
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots! roar on like a stream;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream:
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue.

William Wordsworth.

Street Music

A STREET organ began to play in front of a public-house close by. Grail drew near; there were children forming a dance, and he stood to watch them.

Do you know that music of the obscure ways, to which children dance? Not if you have only heard it ground to your ears' affliction beneath your windows in the square. To hear

it aright you must stand in the darkness of such a by-street as this, and for the moment be at one with those who dwell around, in the blear-eyed houses, in the dim burrows of poverty, in the unmapped haunts of the semi-human. Then you will know the significance of that vulgar clanging of melody; a pathos of which you did not dream will touch you, and therein the secret of hidden London will be half revealed. The life of men who toil without hope, yet with the hunger of an unshaped desire; of women in whom the sweetness of their sex is perishing under labour and misery; the laugh, the song of the girl who strives to enjoy her year or two of youthful vigour, knowing the darkness of the years to come; the careless defiance of the youth who feels his blood and revolts against the lot which would tame it; all that is purely human in these darkened multitudes speaks to you as you listen. It is the half-conscious striving of a nature which knows not what it would attain, which deforms a true thought by gross expression, which clutches at the beautiful and soils it with foul hands.

The children were dirty and ragged, several of them barefooted, nearly all bareheaded, but they danced with noisy merriment. One there was, a little girl, on crutches: incapable of

taking a partner, she stumped round and round circling upon the pavement, till giddiness came upon her and she had to fall back and lean against the wall, laughing aloud at her weakness. Gilbert stepped up to her, and put a penny into her hand: then, before she had recovered from her surprise, passed onwards.

George Gissing (" Thyrza ").

For Those who love Music

I HAD engaged him by the year. Twice a week he came and went through his whole répertoire, and lately, out of sympathy for me, he would play the Miserere of the *Trovatore*, which was his show piece, twice over. He stood there in the middle of the street looking stedfastly up at my windows while he played, and when he had finished he would take off his hat with a " Addio Signor ! "

It is well known that the barrel-organ, like the violin, gets a fuller and more sympathetic tone the older it is. The old artist had an excellent instrument, not of the modern noisy type which imitates a whole orchestra with flutes and bells and beats of drums, but a melancholy old-fashioned barrel-organ, which knew how to lend a dreamy mystery to the

gayest allegretto, and in whose proudest tempo di Marcia there sounded an unmistakable undertone of resignation. And in the tenderer pieces of the répertoire, where the melody, muffled and staggering like a cracked old human voice, groped its way amongst the rusty pipes of the treble, then there was a trembling in the bass like suppressed sobs. Now and then the voice of the tired organ failed it completely, and then the old man would resignedly turn the handle during some bars of rest more touching in their eloquent silence than any music.

True, the instrument was itself very expressive, but the old man had surely his share in the sensation of melancholy which came over me whenever I heard his music. He had his beat in the poor quarter behind the Jardin des Plantes, and many times during my solitary rambles up there had I stopped and taken my place among the scanty audience of ragged street boys which surrounded him.

We made acquaintance one misty dark autumn day. I sat on a bench under the fading trees, which in vain had tried to deck the gloomy square with a little summer, and now hopelessly suffered their leaves to fall; and, like a melancholy accompaniment to my dreamy thoughts, the old barrel-organ in the slum close by coughed out the aria from the

last act of the Traviata: "Addio del passato bei sogni ridenti."

I started as the music stopped. The old man had gone through his whole répertoire, and after a despairing inspection of his audience he resignedly tucked the monkey under his cloak and prepared to depart. I have always liked barrel-organs, and I have a sufficiently correct ear to distinguish good music from bad; so I went up and thanked him and asked him to play a little longer, unless he was too tired in the arm. I am afraid he was not spoiled by praise, for he looked at me with a sad incredulous expression which pained me, and with an almost shy hesitation he asked me if it was any special piece I wished to hear. I left the choice to the old man. After a mysterious manipulation with some screws under the organ, which was answered from its depths by a half-smothered groan, he began slowly and with a certain solemnity to turn the handle, and with a friendly glance at me, he said, "*Questo è per gli amice.*" [1]

It was a tune I had not heard him play before, but I knew well the sweet old melody, and half aloud I searched my memory for the words of perhaps the finest folk-song of Naples:

[1] This is for friends.

"Fenestra che luciva e mo non luce
Segn' è ca Nenna mia stace malata
S'affaccia la sorella e me lo dice:
Nennella toja è morta e s'è aterrata
Chiagneva sempe ca dormeva sola,
Mò dorme in distinta compagnia."

He looked at me with a shy interest while he played, and when he had finished he bared his grey head; I also raised my hat, and thus our acquaintance was made.

It was not difficult to see that times were hard —the old man's clothes were doubtful, and the pallor of poverty lay over his withered features, where I read the story of a long life of failure. He came from the mountains around Monte Cassino, so he informed me, but where the monkey came from I never quite got to know.

Thus we met from time to time during my rambles in the poor quarters. Had I a moment to spare I stopped for a while to listen to a tune or two, as I saw that it gratified the old man, and since I always carried a lump of sugar in my pocket for any dog acquaintance I might possibly meet, I soon made friends with the monkey also. The relations between the little monkey and her impresario were unusually cordial, and this notwithstanding that she had

completely failed to fulfil the expectations which had been founded upon her—she had never been able to learn a single trick, the old man told me. Thus all attempts at education had long ago been abandoned, and she sat there huddled together on her barrel-organ and did nothing at all. Her face was sad, like that of most animals, and her thoughts were far away. But now and then she woke up from her dreams, and her eyes could then take a suspicious, almost malignant expression, as they lit upon some of the street boys who crowded round her tribune and tried to pull her tail, which stuck out from her little gold-laced garibaldi. To me she was always very amiable; confidently she laid her wrinkled hand in mine and absently she accepted the little attention I was able to offer her. She was very fond of sweetmeats, and burnt almonds were, in her opinion, the most delectable thing in the world.

Since the old man had once recognised his musical friend on a balcony of the Hôtel de l'Avenir, he often came and played under my windows. Later on he became engaged, as already said, to come regularly and play twice a week,—it may, perhaps, appear superfluous for one who was studying medicine, but the old man's terms were so small, and you know I have always been so fond of music. Besides,

it was the only recreation at hand—I was working hard in the Hôtel de l'Avenir, for I was to take my degree in the spring.

So passed the autumn, and the hard time came. The rich tried on new winter fashions, and the poor shivered with the cold. It became more and more difficult for well-gloved hands to leave the warm muff or the fur-lined coat to take out a copper for the beggar, and more and more desperate became the struggle for bread amongst the problematical existences of the street. Before hopelessly-closed windows small half-frozen artistes gave concerts in the courtyards; unnoticed resounded the most telling pieces of the répertoire about *La bella Napoli* and *Santa Lucia*, while stiffened fingers twanged the mandoline, and the little sister, shivering with cold, banged the tambourine. In vain the old street-singer sang with hoarse pathos the song about *La Gloire* and *La Patrie*, and in vain my friend played that piece *per gli amici*—thicker and thicker fell the snowflakes over the humbly-bared heads, and scarcer and scarcer fell the coppers into the outstretched hats.

Now and then I came across my friend, and we always had, as before, a kind word for one another. He was now wrapped up in an old Abruzzi cloak, and I noticed that the greater

the cold became the faster did he turn the handle to keep himself warm; and towards December the Miserere itself was performed in allegretto.

The monkey had now become civilian, and wrapped up her little thin body in a long ulster such as Englishmen wear; but she was fearfully cold notwithstanding, and, forgetful of all etiquette, more and more often she jumped from the barrel-organ and crept in under the old man's cloak.

And while they were suffering out there in the cold I sat at home in my cosy, warm room, and instead of helping them, I forgot all about them, more and more taken up as I was with my coming examination, with no thought but for myself. And then one day I suddenly left my lodgings and removed to the Hôtel Dieu to take the place of a comrade, and weeks passed before I put my foot out of the hospital.

I remember it so well, it was the very New Year's Day we met each other again. I was crossing the Place de Notre Dame, mass was just over, and the people were streaming out of the old cathedral. As usual, a row of beggars were standing before the door, imploring the charity of the church-goers. The severe winter had increased their number, and besides the usual beggars, cripples and blind, who were

always by the church porch, reciting in loud voices the history of their misery, there stood a silent rank of Poverty's accidental recruits—poor fellows whose daily bread had been buried under the snow, and whose pride the cold had at last benumbed. At the farther end, and at some distance from the others, an old man stood with bent head and outstretched hat, and with painful surprise I recognised my friend in his threadbare old coat without the Abruzzi cloak, without the barrel-organ, without the monkey. My first impulse was to go up to him, but an uneasy feeling of I do not know what held me back; I felt that I blushed, and I did not move from my place. Every now and then a passer-by stopped for a moment and made as if to search his pocket, but I did not see a single copper fall into the old man's hat. The place became gradually deserted, and one beggar after another trotted off with his little earnings. At last a child came out of the church, led by a gentleman in mourning; the child pointed towards the old man, and then ran up to him and laid a silver coin in his hat. The old man humbly bowed his head in thanks, and even I, with my unfortunate absent-mindedness, was very nearly thanking the little donor also, so pleased was I. My friend carefully wrapped up the precious gift in an old pocket-handkerchief,

and stooping forward, as if still carrying his barrel-organ on his back, he walked off.

I happened to be quite free that morning, and, thinking that a little walk before luncheon could do me no harm after the hospital air, I followed him at a short distance across the Seine. Once or twice I nearly caught him up, and all but tapped him on the shoulder, with a "Buon giorno, Don Gaetano!" Yet, without exactly knowing why, I drew back at the last moment and let him get a few paces ahead of me again.

An icy wind blew straight against us, and I drew my fur cloak closer round me. But then it suddenly struck me to ask myself why, after all, it was I who owned such a warm and comfortable fur cloak, whilst the old man who tramped along in front of me had only a threadbare old coat? And why was it for me that luncheon was waiting, and not for him? Why should I have a good blazing fire burning in my cosy room, while the old man had to wander about the streets the whole day long to find his food, and in the evening go home to his miserable garret and, unprotected against the cold of the winter night, prepare for the next day's struggle for bread?

And it suddenly dawned upon me why I had blushed when I saw him at Notre Dame, and

why I could not make up my mind to go and speak to him—I felt ashamed at life's unmerited generosity to me and its severity to him. I felt as if I had taken something from him which I ought to restore to him ; and I began to wonder whether it might be the fur coat. But I got no further in my meditations, for the old man stopped and looked in at a shop window. We had just crossed the Place Maubert and turned into Boulevard St. Germain ; the boulevard was full of people, so that, without being noticed, I could approach him quite close. He was standing before an elegant confectioner's shop, and to my surprise he entered without hesitation. I took up my position before the shop window, alongside some shivering street arabs who stood there, absorbed in the contemplation of the unattainable delicacies within, and I watched the old man carefully untie his pocket-handkerchief and lay the little girl's gift upon the counter. I had hardly time to draw back before he came out with a red paper bag of sweets in his hand, and with rapid steps he started off in the direction of the Jardin des Plantes.

I was very much astonished at what I had seen, and my curiosity made me follow him. He slackened his pace at one of the little slums behind Hôpital de la Pitie, and I saw him

disappear into a dirty old house. I waited outside a minute or two, and then I groped my way through the pitch-dark entrance, climbed up a filthy staircase, and found a door slightly ajar. An icy, dark room, in the middle three ragged little children crouched together around a half-extinct brazier, in the corner, the only furniture in the room—a clean iron bedstead, with crucifix and rosary hung on the wall above it, and by the window an image of the Madonna adorned with gaudy paper flowers; I was in Italy, in my poor, exiled Italy. And in the purest Tuscan the eldest sister informed me that Don Gaetano lived in the garret. I went up there and knocked, but no one answered, so I opened the door myself. The room was brightly lit up by a blazing fire. With his back towards the door, Don Gaetano was on his knees before the stove busy heating a little saucepan over the fire, beside him on the floor lay an old mattress with the well-known Abruzzi cloak thrown over it, and close by, spread out on a newspaper, were various delicacies—an orange, walnuts, and raisins, and there also was the red paper bag. Don Gaetano dropped a lump of sugar into the saucepan, stirred it with a stick, and in a persuasive voice I heard him say, "*Che bella roba, che bella roba, quanto e buono*

questa latte con lo zucchero! Non piange anima mia, adesso siamo pronti!" [1]

A slight rustling was heard beneath the Abruzzi cloak, and a little black hand was stretched out towards the red paper bag.

"*Primo il latte, primo il latte,*" admonished the old man. "*Non importa, piglio tu una,*" [2] he repented, and took a big burnt almond out of the paper bag; the little hand disappeared and a crunching was heard under the cloak. Don Gaetano poured the warm milk in a saucer, and then he carefully lifted up a corner of the cloak. There lay the poor little monkey with heaving breast and eyes glowing with fever. Her face had become so small, and her complexion was ashen grey. The old man took her on his knees, and tenderly as a mother he poured some spoonfuls of the warm milk into her mouth. She looked with indifferent eyes towards the delicacies on the table, and absently she let her fingers pass through her master's beard. She was so tired that she could hardly hold her head up, and now and then she coughed so that her thin

[1] "What nice things, what nice things! How good this milk and sugar is! Don't cry, my darling; it is ready now!"

[2] "The milk first, the milk first—never mind, take one."

little body trembled, and she pressed both her hands to her temples. Don Gaetano shook his head sadly, and carefully laid the little invalid back under the cloak.

A feeble blush spread over the old man's face as he caught sight of me. I told him that I had happened to be passing by just as he was entering his house, and that I took the liberty of following him upstairs in order to bid him good morning and to give him my new address, in the hope that he would come and play to me as before. I involuntarily looked round for the barrel-organ as I spoke, and Don Gaetano, who understood, informed me that he no longer played the organ—he sang. I glanced at the precious pile of wood beside the fireplace, at the new blanket that hung before the window to keep out the draught, at the delicacies on the newspaper—and I also understood.

The monkey had been ill three weeks—*la febbre*, explained the old man. We knelt one at each side of the bed, and the sick animal looked at me with mute prayer for help. Her nose was hot, as it is with sick children and dogs, her face wrinkled like that of an old, old woman, and her eyes had got quite a human expression. Her breathing was so short, and we could hear how it rattled in her throat. The diagnosis was not difficult—she had consumption. Now

and again she stretched out her thin arms as if she implored us to help her, and Don Gaetano thought that she did so because she wished to be bled.[1] I would willingly have given in in this case, although opposed in principle to this treatment, if I had thought it possible that any benefit could have been derived from it; but I knew only too well how unlikely this was, and I tried my best to make Don Gaetano understand it. Unhappily I did not know myself what there was to be done. I had at that time a friend amongst the keepers of the monkey-house in the Jardin des Plantes, and the same night he came with me to have a look at her; he said there was nothing to be done, and that there was no hope. And he was right. For one week more the fire blazed in Don Gaetano's garret, then it was left to go out, and it became cold and dark as before in the old man's house.

True, he got his barrel-organ out from the pawn-shop, and now and then a copper did fall into his hat also. He did not die of starvation, and that was about all he asked of life.

So the spring came and I left Paris; and God knows what has become of Don Gaetano.

[1] "The lower classes in Italy still use bleeding for all kinds of diseases, and this treatment is also extended to animals. I know a monkey in Naples who was bled twice.

If you happen to hear a melancholy old barrel-organ in the courtyard, go to the window and give a penny to the poor errant musician—perhaps it is Don Gaetano! If you find that his organ disturbs you, try if you like it better by making him stand a little farther off, but don't send him away with harshness! He has to hear so many hard words as it is; why should not we then be a little kind to him—we who love music?

Dr. Axel Munthe.

XIV

A VOCAL CHORUS

Oh, could you view the melody
Of every grace,
And music of her face.

Richard Lovelace (" Orpheus to Beasts ").

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

Omar Khayyám.

He played all kinds of music; and so clear
His singing was, and such a heaven to hear,
Men might not speak during his madrigal.
Amphion, King of Thebes, that put a wall
About the city with his melody,
Certainly sang not half so well as he.

Chaucer.

On Celia Singing to her Lute, in Arundel Garden

HARK, how my Celia, with the choice
Musick of her hand and voice,
Stills the loud wind, and makes the wild
Insensed Boar and Panther mild.
Mark how these statues like men move,
Whilst men with wonder statues prove,
This stiff rock bends to worship her,
That Idol turns Idolater.

Now see how all the new inspir'd
Images with Love are fir'd ;
Hark how the tender Marble groans,
And all the late transformed stones
Court the fair Nymph with many a Tear,
Which she (more stony than they were)
Beholds with unrelenting mind ;
Whilst they, amaz'd to see combin'd
Such matchless Beauty with disdain,
Are all turn'd into stones again.

Thomas Carew.

To Constantia Singing

THUS to be lost and thus to sink and die
  Perchance were death indeed !—Constantia, turn !
In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,
  Even though the sounds which were thy voice, which burn
Between thy lips, are laid to sleep ;
  Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour, it is yet,
And from thy touch like fire doth leap.
  Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,
Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget !

A breathless awe, like the swift change
  Unseen, but felt in youthful slumbers,
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,
  Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.
The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven
  By the enchantment of thy strain,
And on my shoulders wings are woven.
  To follow its sublime career
Beyond the mighty moons that wane

Upon the verge of Nature's utmost sphere,
Till the world's shadowy walls are past and disappear.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul—it lingers
O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,
The blood and life within those snowy fingers
Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.
My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—
The blood is listening in my frame,
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,
Fall on my overflowing eyes ;
My heart is quivering like a flame ;
As morning dew, that in the sunbeam dies,
I am dissolved in these consuming ecstasies.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,
Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song
Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—
Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,
On which, like one in trance upborne,
Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.
Now 'tis the breath of summer night,
Which when the starry waters sleep,
Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright,
Lingering, suspends my soul in its voluptuous flight.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

When Elsie Sang

It is, if we reflect upon the matter, an unwise thing to say *I cannot bear*. The wise gods hear and take advantage. They show us that we are stronger than we thought.

Yet one thing I may safely say I cannot bear —that is, to hear any one but Elsie singing the songs that she sang.

Once again, and but a little while ago, I heard it—her Song—my favourite among her Songs.

> "Laffing at the fuffin' low,
> What sees he there?
> Ah, the little dreamer,
> Biggin' castles in the air!"

It was very sweetly sung, but not as she sang. And to me it was agony. I had to leave the room at last for fear I should cry and grieve the gentle musician. For it reminded me that I should never be a child again. And Elsie is dead.

Hers was the rare prettiness that can in no wise be accounted for, and hers the wit that cannot be defined. She slips through my fingers, if I would explain her. She thought every one good, if that was anyway possible. If not, she

thought every one meant to be good. Her memory lives—or should I rather say that we forget her?—in a little Elsie who laughs and plays close to her old home. Elsie is dead.

She was often ill—so often that we never thought she would die. Once, when her voice had long been silent, she recovered, and sang again. That night, when I came away, I found the servants gathered outside the door "to hear Miss Elsie sing." The coachman was a tipsy fellow. In any other household he would have been dismissed. But Elsie never failed to beg him off. She always believed it was the last time. I do not think they will dismiss him now. Elsie is dead.

She gave her heart to a soldier. Whether he knew of the gift I cannot tell; but I hope he did, for she was simple and never tried to conceal. When he was coming to a dance she would wear a gown of the palest blue, and tiny rosebuds in her hair. That was her way of saying that she loved him. He went across the sea to India, where he took fever and died. Elsie was brave; she said nothing.

Her younger sister married about that time. And Elsie was a child again when the baby came. If you had heard her singing in the nursery, you would not have thought she had a care in the world. Only one thing I noticed. She

was not fond of poetry; but she would take *In Memoriam* to her own room, and trace a faint pencil line by the side of her favourite passages, and learn them—as she learnt all that she loved—by heart. I have the book now. The rest of it is uncut.

She had thought once before that she was dying. She told me how she felt—as if she had drifted away into a cold, cold place, O so cold! all full of clouds—and at the other end a light. When the day came for her to die, she did not know. The old doctor, whose heart was breaking because he could do nothing more for her, bent over and whispered, "Elsie, my child, I think you had better ask God to take you."

I would not live again the happiest year of my life—no, not the happiest month nor week nor day. If one should tell me that I might be again a child—again hear Elsie sing—I should not thank him. And yet, because these things have been and are not, I cannot keep the tears from my eyes.

Elsie is dead.

M. E. Coleridge.

Celia Singing

You that think Love can convey,
No other way
But through the Eyes, into the heart,
His fatal Dart,
Close up those Casements, and but hear
This Syren sing,
And on the wing
Of her sweet voice, it shall appear
That Love can enter at the ear :

Then unveil your Eyes, behold
The curious mould
Where that voice dwells, and as we know
When the Cocks crow,
We freely may
Gaze on the day :
So may you, when the Musick's done,
Awake and see the rising Sun.

Thomas Carew.

Rachel

RACHEL sings sweet—
O yes, at night,
Her pale face bent
In the candlelight,
Her slim hands touch
Each answering key
And she sings of hope
And of memory—
Sings to the little
Boy that stands
Watching those slim,
Light, heedful hands.
He looks in her face ;
Her dark eyes seem
Dark with a beautiful
Distant dream ;
And still she plays,
Sings tenderly
To him of hope
And of memory.

Walter de la Mare.

Why am I Singing all Alone?

WHY am I singing all alone,
Outside your window here?
Because the roses are all blown,
And all the sky is clear.

Because the glen I passed was fair,
And fresh with morning dew,
Because the gold shines in your hair,
Because your eyes are blue.

Because for many a sunny mile
The hills stretch out, and furled
Is every cloud: because God's smile
Is shining through the world.

Dollie Radford.

On a Native Singer,

after hearing Miss Adelaide Kemble

As sweet as the bird that by calm Bendemeer,
Pours such rich modulations of tone—
As potent, as tender, as brilliant, as clear—
Still her voice has a charm of its own.

For lo ! like the skylark, when after its song
It drops down to its nest from above
She reminds us her home and her music belong
To the very same soil that we love.

Thomas Hood.

Music and Memory

(TO K. W.)

ACROSS the tides of music, in the night,
Her magical face,
A light upon it as the happy light
Of dreams in some delicious place
Under the moonlight in the night.

Music, soft throbbing music in the night,
Her memory swims
Into the brain, a carol of delight ;
The cup of music overbrims
With wine of memory, in the night.

Her face across the music, in the night,
Her face a refrain,
A light that sings along the waves of light,
A memory that returns again,
Music in music, in the night.

Arthur Symons.

What Song shall I Sing?

WHAT song shall I sing to you
  Now the wee ones are in bed,
What books shall I bring to you
  Now each little sleepy head
Is tucked away on pillow white,
All snug and cosy for the night?

Many many singers now,
  Sing their new songs in the land,
Many writers bring us now
  Many books to understand,
But I can sing, these evening times,
Only the children's songs and rhymes.

All the day they play with me,
  My heart grows full of their looks,
All their prattle stays with me,
  And I have no mind for books,
Nor care for any other tune
Than they have sung this golden June.

Dollie Radford.

The Village Choir

I CARRIED back in triumph Madame de Waren's music-book, which had been so useful to me, the air of "Alpheus and Arethusa" being almost all I had learned at the seminary. My predilection for this art started the idea of making a musician of me. A convenient opportunity offered; once a week, at least, she had a concert at her house, and the music-master from the cathedral, who directed this little band, came frequently to see her. This was a Parisian named Monsieur le Maître, a good composer, very lively, gay, young, well made, of little understanding, but, upon the whole, a good sort of man. Mamma made us acquainted; I attached myself to him, and he seemed not displeased with me. A pension was talked of, and agreed on; in short, I went home with him, and passed the winter the more agreeably at his chambers, as they were not above twenty paces distant from Madame de Waren's, where we frequently supped together.

It may easily be supposed that this situation, ever gay, and singing with the musicians and children of the choir, was more pleasing to me

than the seminary and fathers of Saint-Lazare. . . . I vividly recollect the time, the place, the persons, and even the temperature and odour of the air, while the lively idea of a certain local impression peculiar to those times transports me back again to the very spot; for example, all that was repeated at our meetings, all that was sung in the choir, everything that passed there—the beautiful and noble vestments of the canons, the chasubles of the priests, the mitres of the singers, the persons of the musicians, an old lame carpenter who played the counter-bass, a little fair abbé who performed on the violin, the ragged cassock which Monsieur le Maître (after taking off his sword) used to put over his secular habit, and the fine surplice with which he covered the rags of the former when he went to the choir, the pride with which I bore my little flute, and seated myself in the orchestra, to assist in a little recitative which Monsieur le Maître had composed on purpose for me, the good dinner that afterwards awaited us, and the good appetites we carried to it. This concourse of objects, strongly retraced in my memory, has charmed me a hundred times as much, or perhaps more, than ever the reality had done. I have always preserved an affection for a certain air of the "Conditor alme siderum,"

because one Sunday in Advent I heard that hymn sung on the steps of the cathedral (according to the custom of that place) as I lay in bed before daybreak. Mademoiselle Merceret, Mamma's chambermaid, knew something of music; I shall never forget a little piece that Monsieur le Maître made me sing with her, and which her master listened to with great satisfaction;—in a word, every particular, even down to the good servant Perrine, whom the boys of the choir took such delight in teasing. The recollections of these times of happiness and innocence frequently returning to my mind, both ravish and affect me.

J. J. Rousseau.

The Singers

GOD sent his Singers upon earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of men
And bring them back to heaven again.

The first, a youth with soul of fire,
Held in his hand a golden lyre;
Through groves he wandered, and by streams,
Playing the music of our dreams.

The second, with a bearded face,
Stood singing in the market place,
And stirred with accents deep and loud
The hearts of all the listening crowd.

A gray old man, the third and last,
Sang in cathedrals dim and vast,
While the majestic organ rolled
Contrition from its mouths of gold.

And those who heard the Singers three
Disputed which the best might be,
For still their music seemed to start
Discordant echoes in each heart.

But the great Master said, " I see
No best in kind but in degree ;
I gave a various gift to each,
To charm, to strengthen, and to teach.

These are the three great chords of might,
And he whose ear is tuned aright,
Will hear no discord in the three,
But the most perfect harmony."

H. W. Longfellow.

Scotch Music

" Now, when they had eaten and were satisfied," Squire Headlong called on Mr. Chromatic for a song; who, with the assistance of his two accomplished daughters, regaled the ears of the company with the following

Terzetto

Grey Twilight, from her shadowy hill,
Discolours Nature's vernal bloom,
And sheds on grove, and field, and rill,
One placid tint of deepening gloom.

The sailor sighs 'mid shoreless seas,
Touched by the thought of friends afar,
As, fanned by ocean's flowing breeze,
He gazes on the western star.

The wanderer hears, in pensive dream,
The accents of the last farewell,
As, pausing by the mountain stream,
He listens to the evening bell.

This terzetto was of course much applauded; Mr. Milestone observing, that he thought the figure in the last verse would have been more

picturesque, if it had been represented with its arms folded and its back against a tree; or, leaning on its staff, with a cockle-shell in its hat like a pilgrim of ancient times.

Mr. Chromatic professed himself astonished that a gentleman of genuine modern taste, like Mr. Milestone, should consider the words of a song of any consequence whatever, seeing that they were at the best only a species of pegs, for the more convenient suspension of crochets and quavers. This remark drew on him a very severe reprimand from Mr. MacLaurel who said to him, "Dinna ye ken, sir, that soond is a thing utterly worthless in itsel, and only effectual in agreeable excitements, as far as it is an aicho to sense? Is there ony soond mair meeserable an' peetifu' than the scrape o' a feddle, when it does na touch ony chord i' the human sensorium? Is there ony mair divine than the deep note o' a bagpipe, when it breathes the auncient meelodies o' leeberty an' love? It is true, there are peculiar trains o' feeling an' sentiment which parteecular combinations o' meelody are calculated to excite; an' sae far music can produce its effect without words: but it does na follow that, when ye put words to it, it becomes a matter of indefference what they are; for a gude strain of impassioned poetry will greatly increase the effect, and a

tessue o' nonsensical doggrel will destroy it a' thegither. Noo, as gude poetry can produce its effect without music, sae will gude music without poetry; and as gude music will be mair poorfu' by itsel' than wi' bad poetry, sae will gude poetry than wi' bad music: but, when ye put gude music an' gude poetry thegither, ye produce the divinest compound o' sentimental harmony that can possibly find its way through the lug to the saul."

Thomas Love Peacock ("Headlong Hall").

XV

DR. JOHNSON ON MUSIC

JOHNSON said of music, that it was the only sensual pleasure without vice.—*Hawkins's* "Life of Johnson."

"NOT six months before his death he [Johnson] wished me to teach him the scale of music: 'Dr. Burney, teach me at least the alphabet of your language.'"

Dr. Burney.

French Horns

MR. LANGTON and he [Johnson] having gone to see a freemason's funeral procession when they were at Rochester, and some solemn music being played on French horns, he said, "This is the first time I have ever been affected by musical sounds"; adding, "that the impression made upon him was of a melancholy kind." Mr. Langton saying, that this effect was a fine one,—Johnson, "Yes, if it softens the mind so as to prepare it for the reception of salutary feelings, it may be good; but inasmuch as it is melancholy *per se*, it is bad."

Boswell ("Life of Johnson").

On the Power of Music

IN the evening our gentleman-farmer and two others entertained themselves and the company with a great number of tunes on the fiddle. Johnson desired to have "Let Ambition fire thy Mind" played over again, and appeared to give a patient attention to it; though he owned to me that he was very insensible to the power of music. I told him that it affected me to such a degree, as often to agitate my nerves

painfully, producing in my mind alternate sensations of pathetic dejection, so that I was ready to shed tears; and of daring resolutions, so that I was inclined to rush into the thickest part of battle. "Sir," said he, "I should never hear it, if it made me such a fool."

Boswell ("Life of Johnson").

Johnson's Flageolet

JOHNSON (laughing): "No, Sir; it must be born with a man to be contented to take up with little things. Women have a great advantage, that they may take up with little things without disgracing themselves; a man cannot except with fiddling. Had I learnt to fiddle I should have done nothing else." Boswell: "Pray, Sir, did you ever play on any musical instrument?" Johnson: "No, Sir, I once bought me a flageolet; but I never made out a tune." Boswell: "A flageolet, Sir!—so small an instrument? I should have liked to hear you play on the violoncello. *That* should have been *your* instrument." Johnson: "Sir, I might as well have played on the violoncello as another; but I should have done nothing else."

Boswell ("Life of Johnson").

Epitaph

on Charles Claudius Philips, a Musician

PHILIPS, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power or hapless love ;
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no more,
Here find that calm thou gav'st so oft before ;
Sleep, undisturb'd, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine !

Boswell ("Life of Johnson," 1740).

Sounds

WE talked of sounds. The General [Paoli] said, there was no beauty in a simple sound, but only in a harmonious composition of sounds. I presumed to differ from this opinion, and mentioned the soft and sweet sound of a fine woman's voice. Johnson: "No, Sir, if a serpent or a toad uttered it, you would think it ugly." Boswell: "So you would think, Sir, were a beautiful tune to be uttered by one of those animals." Johnson: "No, Sir, it would be admired. We have seen fine fiddlers whom we liked as little as toads" (laughing).

Boswell ("Life of Johnson," April 19, 1772).

Music in Heaven

BOSWELL: "As to our employment in a future state, the sacred writings say little. The Revelation, however, of St. John gives us many ideas, and particularly mentions music." JOHNSON: "Why, Sir, ideas must be given you by means of something which you know: and as to music, there are some philosophers and divines who have maintained, that we shall not be spiritualised to such a degree, but that something of matter, very much refined, will remain. In that case, music may make a part of our future felicity."

Boswell ("Life of Johnson," March 27, 1772).

Vocal Music

To the delights of music he was . . . insensible. Neither voice nor instrument, nor the harmony of concordant sounds, had power over his affections, or even to engage his attention. Of music in general he had been heard to say, "it excites in my mind no ideas, and hinders me from contemplating my own"; and of a fine singer, or instrumental performer, that "he

had the merit of a Canary-bird." Not that his hearing was so defective as to account for this insensibility, but he laboured under the misfortune which he has noted in his life of Baretier, and is common to more persons than in this musical age are willing to confess, of wanting that additional sense or faculty which renders music grateful to the human ear.

Sir John Hawkins ("Life of Johnson").

Scotch Music

MISS M'LEAN gave us several tunes on a spinnet, which, though made so long ago as in 1667, was still very well toned. She sang along with it. Dr. Johnson seemed pleased with the music, though he owns he neither likes it, nor has hardly any perception of it. At Mr. M'Pherson's in Slate, he told us, that "he knew a drum from a trumpet, and a bagpipe from a guitar, which was about the extent of his knowledge of music." To-night he said, that, "if he had learnt music, he should have been afraid he would have done nothing else but play. It was a method of employing the mind, without the labour of thinking at all, and with some applause from a man's self." We had the music of the bagpipe every day, at Armidale,

Dunvegan, and Col, Dr. Johnson appeared fond of it, and used often to stand for some time with his ear close to the great drone.

Boswell ("Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," Oct. 15, 1773).

Miss Thrale's Playing

AFTER having talked slightingly of music, he [Johnson] was observed to listen very attentively while Miss Thrale played on the harpsichord; and with eagerness he called to her, "Why don't you dash away like Burney?" Dr. Burney upon this said to him, "I believe, Sir, we shall make a musician of you at last." Johnson with candid complacency replied, "Sir, I shall be glad to have a new sense given to me."

Boswell ("Life of Johnson").

XVI

CONCERTS AND OPERA

I WAS all ear
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death.

John Milton ("Comus").

The Overture at the Theatre

See to their desks Apollo's sons repair—
Swift rides the rosin o'er the horse's hair !
In unison their various tones to tune,
Murmurs the hautboy, growls the hoarse bassoon ;
In soft vibration sighs the whispering lute,
Tang goes the harpsichord, too-too the flute,
Brays the loud trumpet, squeaks the fiddle sharp,
Winds the French-horn, and twangs the tingling harp ;
Till, like great Jove, the leader, figuring in,
Attunes to order the chaotic din.
Now all seems hush'd—but, no, one fiddle will
Give, half ashamed, a tiny flourish still.
Foil'd in his crash, the leader of the clan
Reproves with frowns the dilatory man :
Then on his candlestick thrice taps his bow,
Nods a new signal, and away they go.

James Smith.

A June-tide Echo

(After a Richter-Concert)

In the long sad time, when the sky was grey,
And the keen blast blew through the city drear,
When delight had fled from the night and the day,
My chill heart whispered, "June will be here!

"June with its roses a-sway in the sun,
Its glory of green on mead and tree."
Lo, now the sweet June-tide is nearly done,
June-tide and never a joy for me!

Is it so much of the gods that I pray?
Sure craved man never so slight a boon!
To be glad and glad in my heart one day—
One perfect day of the perfect June.

Sweet sounds to-night rose up, wave upon wave;
Sweet dreams were afloat in the balmy air.
This is the boon of the gods that I crave—
To be glad, as the music and night were fair.

For once, for one fleeting hour, to hold
The fair shape the music that rose and fell
Revealed and concealed like a veiling fold ;
To catch for an instant the sweet June spell.

For once, for one hour, to catch and keep
The sweet June secret that mocks my heart ;
Now lurking calm, like a thing asleep,
Now hither and thither with start and dart.

Then the sick slow grief of the weary years,
The slow, sick grief and the sudden pain ;
The long days of labour, the nights of tears—
No more these things would I hold in vain.

I would hold my life as a thing of worth ;
Pour praise to the gods for a precious thing.
So, June in her fairness is on the earth,
And never a joy does the niggard bring.

Amy Levy.

After a Concert

'Tis o'er—and where has gone the melody
That filled my soul with such intense delight ?
Have golden chords like these fled utterly
Into the still and unresponsive night ?
Will they no more my drooping thoughts upstay

In days to come when dark despondence
reigns ?
Will they no more illumine life's dull grey,
No more with rich exultance ease its pain ?

Content thyself : 'tis much two golden hours
To pluck from out the niggard hands of fate :
Ask not for more, lest in return it sours
Your days with dulness at a double rate :
Yet will some echo of the chords remain
That shall in days of gloom my soul sustain.

Bertram Dobell.

Compact of Jars

" It is," said Sydney Smith at a performance of *Israel in Egypt*, " a disgusting sight to see two hundred and fifty fellows fiddling away about the children of Israel." He had one advantage at any rate—he knew what they were fiddling about. Many of us do not. The cause or ground of " the idea " is wanting.

An artist scouts " the idea." Leslie happened to commend Stothard one day, because he was so pathetic in the picture of a sailor taking leave of his wife or his sweetheart.

" I am glad you like it, sir," said Stothard, " it was painted with Japanner's gold size."

Nowadays, literary men scorn the very idea of "the idea," asserting that they care for nothing but the arrangement of words.

True it is that only an artist can pretend to say how a picture is painted—only a literary man can unfold (can he unfold?) the secret of style. And yet the idea holds her own. Tom, Dick and Harry insist upon it that they know quite well whether the portrait is like—whether the story is probable. "*I should never have known*"—"*I do not understand.*" The craftsman may be as superior to the opinion of any but his brethren as a certain King of the Romans was to the rules of Grammar, he dreads those two phrases.

Now the musician is free from terror of that kind. Except in Programme Music he is not bound to any natural resemblance, and the story told by him is so vague that no two members of the same audience, whether large or small, could be found to agree upon it. Some think it is the story of his own life—others will say that he recalls to them theirs. Persons who have the right to know assert that there never was any story. Attempt to name a composition—call it, say, the *Moonlight Sonata*—and you are angrily informed that the composer was thinking of anything in the world except moonlight. His technique is only under-

stood by the few. What do the many feel when they flock to hear him? That they do feel sometimes very strongly, there can be no question.

The unmusical are often devoted to music. They love not only the Martial Air which sets them fighting, and the Minuet which sets them dancing in costumes of the time of Gluck, but much that is no more intelligible to them than the murmur of wave, the soft, dull falling of rain on grass, or the wind. They pass into a state of mesmerism, of senseless bliss or melancholy; they are held entranced in a delicate twilight of the mind. They do not know what o'clock it is, nor whether they are in *South Kensington* or *Hong Kong*. Their features are vacant, they do not look as people look at a Theatre, when the varying motives of the actors are repeated in minor key among the audience, they are not keenly awake and argumentative like the congregation of an eloquent preacher, responding or contradicting. They are lotus eaters; theirs is the

> "Music that gentlier on the spirit lies
> Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes."

Yet they are by no means asleep, for they never forget to see—as the musical do. The lyre-shaped stands of the orchestra send them back to Orpheus. They wonder what reed-piping

Pan would have thought of that vast porcupine, the organ, with the small, bright eye of looking-glass. They take occasion to notice how like their instruments men become ; so that a good violinist is no more separable from his violin than a good rider from his horse. They enjoy the flower-bed effect of the chorus—the twinkle of the paper parts when a new page is reached, as though the wind were turning up the leaves. Most of all they delight to watch the eloquent back of the conductor—the cabalistic waving of arms and hands with which he rouses or quells that storm of harmony. A true musician he, so ruling and compelling time that every sense of the tyrannous thing is lost in those who listen ; a true general—not only the incarnate spirit of the host that he leads, but the commander in a Holy War of the immaterial against flesh and blood.

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,"

is, according to a young gentleman who treacherously ran away with a young lady out of her father's house,

> "Fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

Never was there a more unjust sentence. Many an excellent man has lived, many a judge, many a bishop, who did not know one note from

another. Henry VIII was not a saint, though he was doubtless a good musician. Snakes are proverbially charmed by music; but the most dove-like woman, a woman also who says she is fond of music, will make tea without remorse, to the distraction of the unmusical, serenely ignorant that she is making in them an impulse to commit murder because the horrible clatter of cups and saucers keeps them out of their blessed Nirvana.

Nor does she always remember that a piano is a hard, square, masculine thing, which needs a woman to draw out the sweetness of it. To see a man at the broad end, thumping and smashing the notes, wrestling with the big, heavy compound of wood and metal, swaying to and fro with the exertion, his hair too long, his hands too white—this is no pleasure. I wish the man would do something else. A tall, graceful, willow-like lady, on the other hand, will impart something of her own flexibility to the rigid chest; she will divine the winged genii under the lid and coax them out with her long fingers. Men should keep to the violin. That instrument is a woman; and to a woman it will never yield up all its treasures.

M. E. Coleridge.

Musical Gossip

. . . AND now, my dear friend, let's draw our stools together, and have some fun. Is it possible we can help talking of Haydn first? How do you like him? What does he say? What does he do? What does he play upon? How does he play? . . . The papers say he has been bowed to by whole orchestras when he has appeared at the playhouses. Is he about anything in the way of composition? Come! come! I'll pester you no more with interrogations; but trust to your generosity to gratify my ardent curiosity in your own way. I have just—and I am ashamed to say, but just—sent for his "Stabat Mater!" Fisin told me some quartets had, not long ago, been published by him. He has written so much that I cannot help fearing he will soon have written himself dry. If the resources of any human composer could be inexhaustible, I should suppose Haydn's would; but as, after all, he is but a mortal, I am afraid he must soon get to the bottom of his genius box. How does Giroretz go on? That man seems to me to have a something of his own mixed with the improvement which every man must owe to his

predecessors in the art. I look upon it to be, at this time of day, the most difficult thing of all in music to produce a piece of melody that shall seem to be new, without being forced and queer. Now, I think I hear such little bits of felicity, every now and then, in Giroretz's ear. I know it would be a bold thing to assert of any melodious phrase that it is absolutely new, and has never been produced before; but musical novelty is not to be taken in so strict a sense. We may fairly call a passage new when it strikes an ear hackneyed in good melody as, on the whole, uncommonly pleasing. *N'est-ce pas?*

We have lately had very comfortable fiddling here; indeed, the best dilettante fiddling I ever had to do with. My friend Mr. Tindal is come to settle (for the present, at least) in this neighbourhood. He is going to succeed me in the curacy of Fordham. He plays the fiddle well, the harpsichord well, the violoncello well. Now, sir, when I say "well," I can't be supposed to mean the wellness that one should predicate of a professor who makes those instruments his study; but that he plays in a very ungentlemanlike manner, exactly in tune and time, with taste, accent, and meaning, and the true sense of what he plays; and, upon the violoncello, he has execution sufficient

to play Boccherini's quintettos at least what may be called very decently. But ask Fisin; he will tell you about our fiddlings, and vouch for our decency, at least. I saw in one of the public prints an insinuation that Haydn, upon his arrival in London, had detected some forgeries, some things published in his name that were not done by him. Is that true? It does not seem very unlikely.

Rev. Thomas Twining.

Haydn in London—

A Sweet Straduarius

How good it was of you to gratify me with another canto of the "Haydniad"! It is all most interesting to me. I don't know anything, any musical thing, that would delight me so much as to meet him in a snug quartett party, and hear his manner of playing his own music. If you can bring about such a thing while I am in town, either at Chelsea, or at Dr. Burney's, or at Mr. Salomon's, or at I care not where, if it were even in the black hole at Calcutta (if it is a good hole for music)—I say, if by hook or by crook, you could manage such a thing, you should be my Magnus Apollo for

the rest of your life. I mention Salomon because we are a little acquainted. He has twice asked me to call upon him, and I certainly will do it when I come to town. I want to hear more of his playing ; and I seem, from the little I have seen of him, to like the man. I know not how it is, but I really receive more musical pleasure from such private *cameranious* fiddlings, and singings, and keyed instrument playings than from all the *apprêt* of public and crowded preformances. But how mad it made me to think that all that good music you tell me of, and Haydn's original fiddling, and the exquisite expression of his " Passione," should be spilt into the unworthy and leathern ears of that raw, staring, schoolboy-faced simpleton. That was cutting a block with a razor, I am sure. If Haydn had known as much of him as I do, he never could have answered it to his conscience even to try to give him so much pleasure. But I am envious, you see, and you must allow for that. But how provoking that I should get the wrong cantata ! and yet there is no wrong in the matter, for I suppose it is Haydn's, and it is charming, I think, be it whose it will. I will try again. . . .

I have lately had a sort of fiddle mania upon me, brought on by trying and comparing different Stainers, Cremonas, etc. I believe

I have got possession of a sweet Straduarius which I play upon with much more pleasure than my Stainer; partly because the tone is sweeter, mellower, rounder, and partly because the stop is longer. My Stainer is undersized; and on that account less valuable, though the tone is as bright, piercing, and full, as of any Stainer I ever heard. Yet when I take it up after the Straduarius, it sets my teeth on edge. The tone comes out plump, all at once. There is a comfortable reserve of tone in the Straduarius, and it bears pressure, and you may draw upon it for almost as much tone as you please. I think I shall bring it to town with me, and then you shall hear it. 'Tis a battered, shattered, cracky, resinous old blackguard. But if every bow that ever crossed its strings from its birth had been sugared instead of resined, more sweetness could not come out of its belly.

Rev. Thomas Twining.

Miss Harrop's Singing—

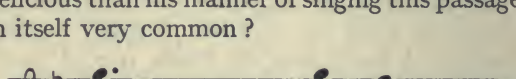
PACCHIEROTTI THE TENOR

. . . We were together at two operas—Contadina in Corte, etc., and Q. Fabio; at Bach's concert; and we dined with Bates one day,

and heard Miss Harrop sing from tea-time till 10 o'clock ; snug and comfortable ; no audience but the two Bates's, Mrs. Bates, and ourselves. One of the greatest musical treats I ever had. I had, as Sir Hugh Evans says, " great dispositions to cry," nay, the tears actually came out, and Elmsall said he should have cried if he had not seen how foolish I looked. She sung Pergolesi, Leo, Hasse—things I know, and that nobody sings. It gave me some faint idea of meeting one's departed friends in heaven. I was thrice at Bach's concert. I imagine how I was pleased to hear Miss Harrop begin " Nel chinso centro," etc., my old favourite cantata of Pergolesi, which I never expected to hear so sung and so accompanied ! She sang only the first verse and air. Afterwards, at Bates's, she went through the whole. She has every sort of expression. She sung the last angry, despairing air with vast spirit and sympathy. I can find nothing like a fault, except a little timidity, caution, taking breath, and other symptoms of *apprêt* and teaching in her cadences. Well, but Pacchierotti ! *C'en est fait.* I confess I have never been so charmed and interested by any singer of this class. Your disliking him so much had great weight with me. It did not quite overset all the expectations that Dr. Burney's account had raised in

me; but it made me despair of being very highly pleased, though I expected to like Pacchierotti better than you did. I went to the opera in a state as near perfect neutrality as I could put myself in. I began to hear as Descartes would have one begin to reason. In his (not Descartes') first line of recitative his voice and manner got immediate hold of me. I shuffled forward upon my seat, and said to myself, "This is superior singing." *Quid multis?* I heard him six times, one of which was at Dr. Burney's, in a snug way. I liked him better and better, and do think that for taste, spontaneous variation, delicacy and expression, he is far beyond any singer I have heard. His voice, though not strong, and liable to variation, is to my ear sweet with a very peculiar sort of sweetness. Ingracing, he does the most beautiful, most unassignable, most unwritten and unwriteable things I ever heard; there seems no end of his fancy; and all—at least, most of it—is evidently *sur-le-champ*. He also seems to me to feel more than any singer I remember, and though his fancy and his flexibility of voice lead him sometimes into an intemperance of ornament, yet I never heard any singer who could give such expression as he often does to a few simple notes. His recitative is delightful. For instance (I

suppose you will hear Q. Fabio), observe one line of recitative, " Apri quei vaghi lumi," in the sixth scene of the third act, where he finds Emilia in a swoon. There is a very fine song in the second act, " Ma pria ch'io rieda al campo." He is equally excellent, I think, in the proud and tender expression of it ; but in particular, will you say you ever heard anything more delicious than his manner of singing this passage, in itself very common ?



I know that things of this kind must be lost upon people who are not advanced to a certain degree in music. I do not expect simple hearers to be pleased. But you ! Surely Pacchierotti must sing much better (better, everybody says) this winter than the last, or he must have got at you, now and then, at least. If you think me prejudiced, you will not think Elmsall prejudiced, and he was delighted : " What can Hey mean," quoth he, " by not liking this ? " I confess I was much pleased to find we heard in perfect sympathy. I did not expect him to be so much pleased as I was. I don't deny that Pacchierotti has faults. He sometimes sings a note too flat ; though but very seldom, when-

ever I have heard him. He sometimes does too much; is exuberant and wanton. But to have too much fancy and invention is so rare a fault! His cadences are often not quite what one would expect from the rest of his singing; I liked him less there than anywhere. When I heard him in a room I was surprised to find his voice husky. In his first song he was so hoarse that it was pain to hear him. He had no cold; but he is liable to a sudden pain in his stomach, which affects his voice, and in a song or two goes off. I should suppose it some weakness of this sort that makes him liable to sing high notes too flat. At best, his voice in a room has a very different effect from what it has upon the stage; it wants distance to deliver it bright and clear to the ear. I was much pleased with Pacchierotti as a man and a conversable creature. He seems to have a great deal of sense, sensibility, taste, and modesty; loves English, and studies it, as he expresses it "hardly." . . . I must pull in or my letter will never end. The comic opera, I think, is in a sad plight as to singers.

Rev. Thomas Twining.

Sinfonia Eroica

TO SYLVIA

My Love, my Love, it was a day in June,
A mellow, drowsy, golden afternoon;
And all the eager people thronging came
To that great hall, drawn by the magic name
Of one, a high magician, who can raise
The spirits of the past and future days,
And draw the dreams from out the secret breast,
Giving them life and shape.
I, with the rest,
Sat there athirst, a-tremble for the sound;
And as my aimless glances wandered round,
Far off, across the hush'd expectant throng,
I saw your face that fac'd mine.
Clear and strong
Rush'd forth the sound, a mighty mountain stream;
Across the clust'ring heads mine eyes did seem
By subtle forces drawn, your eyes to meet.
Then you, the melody, the summer heat,
Mingled in all my blood and made it wine,
Straight I forgot the world's great woe and mine;
My spirit's murky lead grew molten fire;

Despair itself was rapture.
Ever higher,
Stronger and clearer rose the mighty strain;
Then sudden fell; then all was still again,
And I sank back, quivering as one in pain.
Brief was the pause; then 'mid a hush profound,
Slow on the waiting air swell'd forth a sound
So wondrous sweet that each man held his breath;
A measur'd mystic melody of death.
Then back you lean'd your head and I could note
The upward outline of your perfect throat;
And ever, as the music smote the air,
Mine eyes from far held fast your body fair.
And in that wondrous moment seem'd to fade
My life's great woe, and grow an empty shade
Which had not been, nor was not.
And I knew
Not which was sound, and which, O Love, was you.

Amy Levy.

Javanese Dancers :

A SILHOUETTE

TWITCHED strings, the clang of metal, beaten drums,
Dull, shrill, continuous, disquieting ;
And now the stealthy dancer comes
Undulantly with cat-like steps that cling ;

Smiling between her painted lids a smile,
Motionless, unintelligible, she twines
Her fingers into mazy lines,
Twining her scarves across them all the while.

One, two, three, four, step forth, and, to and fro,
Delicately and imperceptibly,
Now swaying gently in a row,
Now interthreading slow and rhythmically.

Still with fixed eyes, monotonously still,
Mysteriously, with smiles inanimate,
With lingering feet that undulate,
With sinuous fingers, spectral hands that thrill,

The little amber-coloured dancers move,
  Like little painted figures on a screen,
  Or phantom dancers haply seen
Among the shadows of a magic grove.

Arthur Symons.

Bach's Second Concerto

WHAT fresh and breezy joyousness is here,
  What youthful spirit, what rapture of delight,
What scorn of baseness, what contempt of fear!
  What power to put all sombre thoughts to flight!
Once more the world is full of old romance,
  Once more life's jarring keys are all in tune,
Once more in woodland scenes the fairies dance
  And desolate winter turns to glorious June!

Ah! could man's life to such a tune be set,
  Its dull beat changed for these exultant strains,
What room were there for sorrow or regret,
  Or who could doubt that God exists and reigns!
The music dies—and I am sad again,
But with a tenderer grief, a sadder pain.

Bertram Dobell.

"Don Giovanni"

COVENT GARDEN, JULY 25TH, 1902

SURE of himself and of his power to do
Whatever task is from his art required,
The artist truly great needs not to woo
The muse, since he is ever self-inspired.
The supreme poet, painter, or musician
Does easily and as a thing of course
What the less-gifted strive with hard volition
To emulate, vain exercise of force!
So Mozart's inspirations came unsought
And never failed him; whatsoe'er his theme
His soul responded to each call and wrought
From each a thing immortal and supreme:
So, born for endless time, not for an age,
He lives, the Shakespeare of the lyric stage.

Bertram Dobell.

XVII

ST. CECILIA

WHEN such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook,
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
The air such pleasures loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

John Milton.

Ode on St. Cecilia's Day

I

DESCEND, ye Nine! descend and sing;
The breathing instruments inspire,
Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre!
  In a sadly-pleasing strain
  Let the warbling lute complain:
    Let the loud trumpet sound,
    Till the roofs all around
    The shrill echoes rebound:
While in more lengthened notes and slow,
The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.
  Hark! the numbers soft and clear,
  Gently steal upon the ear;
  Now louder, and yet louder rise,
  And fill with spreading sounds the skies;
Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,
In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats;
  Till, by degrees remote and small,
    The strains decay,
    And melt away,
  In a dying, dying fall.

II

By music, minds an equal temper know,
  Nor swell too high, nor sink too low.
If in the breast tumultuous joys arise,
Music her soft, assuasive voice applies;
  Or when the soul is pressed with cares,
Exalts her in enlivening airs.
Warriors she fires with animated sounds:
Pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds:
  Melancholy lifts her head,
  Morpheus rouses from his bed,
  Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes,
  Listening envy drops her snakes;
Intestine war no more our passions wage,
And giddy factions bear away their rage.

III

But when our country's cause provokes to arms,
How martial music every bosom warms!
So when the first bold vessel dared the seas,
High on the stern the Thracian raised his strain,
    While Argo saw her kindred trees
    Descend from Pelion to the main.
    Transported demi-gods stood round,
  And men grew heroes at the sound,
  Inflamed with glory's charms:

Each chief his sevenfold shield displayed,
And half unsheathed the shining blade:
And seas, and rocks, and skies rebound,
To arms, to arms, to arms!

IV

But when through all the infernal bounds,
Which flaming Phlegethon surrounds,
  Love strong as death, the poet led
  To the pale nations of the dead,
What sounds were heard,
What scenes appeared,
  O'er all the dreary coasts!
    Dreadful gleams,
    Dismal screams
    Fires that glow,
    Shrieks of woe,
    Sullen moans,
    Hollow groans
  And cries of tortured ghosts!
But hark! he strikes the golden lyre:
And see! the tortured ghosts respire,
    See shady forms advance!
  Thy stone, O Sisyphus, stands still,
  Ixion rests upon his wheel,
    And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds,
And snakes uncurled hang listening round their heads.

V

By the streams that ever flow,
By the fragrant winds that blow
O'er the Elysian flowers;
By those happy souls who dwell
In Yellow meads of Asphodel,
Or Amaranthine bowers;
By the hero's armed shades,
Glittering through the gloomy glades,
By the youths that died for love,
Wandering in the myrtle grove,
Restore, restore Eurydice to life;
Oh take the husband or return the wife!

He sung, and hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer:
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.
Thus Song could prevail
O'er death, and o'er hell,
A conquest how hard and how glorious!
Though fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her,
Yet music and love were victorious.

VI

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes !
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies !
How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move ?
No crime was thine, if 'tis no crime to love.
How under hanging mountains,
Beside the fall of fountains,
Or where Hebrus wanders,
Rolling in Mæanders,
All alone
Unheard, unknown,
He makes his moan ;
And calls her ghost,
For ever, ever, ever lost !
How with furies surrounded,
Despairing, confounded,
He trembles, he glows,
Amidst Rhodope's snows ;
See wild as the winds, o'er the desert he flies ;
Hark ! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals' cries—
Ah see, he dies !
Yet even in death Eurydice he sung,
Eurydice still trembled on his tongue,
Eurydice the woods,
Eurydice the floods,
Eurydice the rocks, and hollow mountains rung.

VII

Music the fiercest grief can charm,
And fate's severest rage disarm;
Music can soften pain to ease,
And make despair and madness please.
Our joys below it can improve,
And antedate the bliss above,
This the divine Cecilia found,
And to her Maker's praise confined the sound.
When the full organ joins the tuneful choir,
The immortal powers incline their ear,
Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire;
And angels lean from heaven to hear.
Of Orpheus now no more let poets tell,
To bright Cecilia greater power is given;
His numbers raised a shade from hell,
Hers lift the soul to heaven.

Alexander Pope.

A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap

Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
Arise, ye more than dead.
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the corded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangour
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms.

The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge! 'tis too late to retreat.

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appear'd,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

As from the power of sacred lays
    The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
    To all the bless'd above ;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling planet shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

John Dryden.

XVIII

MUSIC THE CONSOLER

TO MUSICK TO BECALM A SWEET SICK YOUTH

Charms, that call down the moon from out her sphere,
On this sick youth work your enchantments here :
Bind up his senses with your numbers, so,
As to entrance his paine, or cure his woe.
Fall gently, gently, and a while him keep
Lost in the civill Wildernesse of sleep :
That done, dispossest of paine,
Like to a slumbring Bride, awake againe.

Robert Herrick

Let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.

John Milton (" Il Penseroso").

At a Solemn Music

BLEST pair of Sirens! pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbèd song of pure concent
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Sing everlastingly:
That we on earth with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disappointed sin
Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din

Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To His celestial consort us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

John Milton.

Easter

RISE, heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing His praise
Without delayes,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With Him mayest rise:
That as His death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for the part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound His name,
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key

Is best to celebrate this most high day.
Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all musick is but three parts vied
And multiplied;
O let Thy blessed Spirit bear a part
And make up our defects with His sweet art.

G. Herbert.

To Musique, to Becalm his Fever

I

CHARM me asleep, and melt me so
With thy Delicious Numbers;
That being ravisht, hence I goe
Away in easie slumbers.
Ease my sick head,
And make my bed,
Thou Power that canst sever
From me this ill:
And quickly still:
Though thou not kill
My Fever.

II

Thou sweetly canst convert the same
From a consuming fire,
Into a gentle-licking flame,
And make it thus expire.
Then make me weep
My paines asleep;
And give me such reposes
That I, poore I,
May think, thereby,
I live and die
'Mongst Roses.

III

Fall on me like a silent dew,
Or like those Maiden show'rs,
Which, by the peepe of day, doe strew
A Baptime o'er the flowers.
Melt, melt my paines,
With thy soft straines;
That having ease me given,
With full delight,
I leave this light;
And take my flight
For Heaven.

Robert Herrick.

Perplexed Music

EXPERIENCE, like a pale musician, holds
A dulcimer of patience in his hand,
Whence harmonies, we cannot understand,
Of God's will in His worlds, the strain unfolds
In sad perplexèd minors: deathly colds
Fall on us while we hear, and countermand
Our sanguine heart back from the fancy-land
With nightingales in visionary wolds.
We murmur, "Where is any certain tune
Or measured music in such notes as these?"
But angels, leaning from the golden seat,
Are not so minded; their fine ear hath won
The issue of completed cadences,
And, smiling down the stars, they whisper—
SWEET. *Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

The Music o' the Dead

WHEN music in a heart that's true,
Do kindle up wold loves anew,
An' dim wet eyes, in feäirest lights,
Do zee but inward fancy's zights;
When creepèn years, wi' with'ren blights,
'V a-took off them that wer so dear,

How touchèn 'tis if we do hear
The tuèns o' the dead, John.

When I, a-stannèn in the lew
O' trees a storm's a-beätèn arough,
Do zee the slantèn mist a-drove
By spitevul winds along the grove,
An' hear their hollow sounds above
My shelter'd head, do seem as I
Do think o' zunny days gone by,
L' music vor the dead, John.

Last night, as I wer gwain along
The brook, I heard the milkmaïd's zong
A ringèn out so clear an' shrill
Along the meäds an' roun' the hill.
I catch'd the tuèn, an' stood still
To hear't; 'twer woone that Jeane did zing
A-vield, a-milkèn in the spring,—
Sweet music o' the dead, John.

Don't tell o' zongs that be a-zung
By young chaps now, wi' sheämless tongue;
Zing me wold ditties, that would start
The maïden's tears, or stir my heart
To teake in life a manly peärt,—
The wold vok's zongs that twold a täele,
An' vollow'd round their mugs o' eale
The music o' the dead, John.

William Barnes.

Homesickness

THERE calleth me ever a marvellous Horn,
" Come away ! Come away ! "
Is it earthly music faring astray,
Or is it air-born ?
Oh, whether it be a spirit-wile
Or a forest voice,
It biddeth mine ailing heart rejoice,
Yet sorrow the while !

In the greenwood glades—o'er the garlanded bowl—
Night, Noontide, and Morn,
The summoning call of that marvellous Horn
Tones home to my soul !
In vain have I sought for it east and west,
But I darkly feel
That so soon as its music shall cease to peal
I go to my rest ! *James Clarence Mangan.*

The Choir Invisible

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence : live

In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like
stars,
And with their wild persistence urge man's
search
To vaster issues.
So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonised
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child,
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burthen of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love—

That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread for ever.
This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardours, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

George Eliot.

Death as the Sweet Singer sent from God

A SILVERY song came stealing through the night,
Sweet as the faint far echo of a hymn
Full chaunted by the choir of cherubim,
Or lark's clear singing in its heavenward flight.

And looking forth, I saw Death clothed in light,
Who smiled, and said, " Of old, men's eyes
were dim,

And I in sooth was some deal gaunt and grim,
But Christ hath made me fair in all men's
sight."

Therewith he struck his harp, and sang the strain
Nearer and fuller, that in its soar and swell
The very voice of heaven seemed audible,
And mighty voices of the past, and dear
Beyond all thought, and ah! sweet Death,
how near,
Voices long loved and lost, now heard again.

Sir Frank T. Marzials.

The Last Music

CALMLY, breathe calmly all your music, maids!
Breathe a calm music over my dead queen.
All your lives, you have not heard, nor seen,
Fairer than she, whose hair in sombre braids
With beauty overshades
Her brow broad and serene.

Surely she hath lain so an hundred years:
Peace is upon her, old as the world's heart.
Breathe gently, music! Music done, depart:
And leave me in her presence to my tears,
With music in my ears;
For sorrow hath its art.

Music, more music, sad and slow! She lies
Dead: and more beautiful than early morn.
Discrowned am I, and of her looks forlorn:
Alone vain memories immortalize
The way of her soft eyes,
Her virginal voice low-borne.

The balm of gracious death now laps her round,
As once life gave her grace beyond her peers.
Strange! that I loved this lady of the spheres,
To sleep by her at last in common ground:
When kindly death hath bound
Mine eyes, and sealed mine ears.

Maidens! make a low music: merely make
Silence a melody, no more. This day
She travels down a pale and lonely way:
Now for a gentle comfort, let her take
Such music, for her sake,
As mourning love can play.

Holy my queen lies in the arms of death:
Music moves over her still face, and I
Lean breathing love over her. She will lie
In earth thus calmly, under the wind's breath:
The twilight wind that saith:
Rest! worthy found, to die.

Lionel Johnson.

Eternal Harmony of Created Sound

LET us take another instance, of an outward and earthly form, or economy, under which great wonders unknown seem to be typified ; I mean musical sounds, as they are exhibited most perfectly in instrumental harmony. There are seven notes in the scale ; make them fourteen ; yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise ! What Science brings so much out of so little ? Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world ! Shall we say that all this is exuberant inventiveness, is a mere ingenuity or trick of art, like some game or fashion of the day, without reality, without meaning ? We may do so ; and then, perhaps, we shall also account the science of theology to be a matter of words ; yet, as there is a divinity in the theology of the Church which those who feel cannot communicate, so is there also in the wonderful creation of sublimity and beauty of which I am speaking. To many men the very names which the science employs are utterly incomprehensible. To speak of an idea or a subject seems to be fanciful or trifling, to speak of the views which it opens upon us to be childish

extravagance; yet is it possible that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No; they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our Home; they are the voice of Angels, or the Magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine Governance, or the Divine Attributes; something are they besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter—though mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them.

John Henry Newman.

XIX

A DISCORD

ON A VOLUNTEER SINGER

SWANS sing before they die :—'twere no bad thing,
Should certain persons die before they sing !

S. T. Coleridge.

MAIS, au fond, Paris est trop vivant, trop cérébral pour bien aimer la musique, cette grande absorbeuse qui vous tient immobile, sans voix et sans pensée, dans un reseau flottant d'harmonie, vous berce, vous hypnotise comme la mer.

Alphonse Daudet (" Numa Roumestan ").

. . . it is curious that all the literary men of our day feel the same about music. Balzac abhorred it, Hugo cannot endure it. Lamartine has a horror of it. There are only a few painters who have a taste for it.

Jules de Goncourt (" Journal," March 4, 1860).

A Chapter on Ears

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, or done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel "quite unabashed,"[1] and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—*for music*. To say

[1 "Earless on high stood, unabashed, Defoe."—*Dunciad*.]

that this heart never melted at the concord of sweet sounds, would be a foul self-libel. "*Water parted from the sea*" never fails to move it strangely. So does "*In infancy.*" But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest —why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——, once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple—who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite for Alice W——n.

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising "*God save the King*" all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For thrumming, in my mild way, on my friend A.'s piano, the other morning, while he was en-

gaged in an adjoining parlour,—on his return he was pleased to say, "*he thought it could not be the maid!*" On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being—technically, perhaps, deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts—had swayed the keys to a mood which Jenny, with all her (less cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend's penetration, and not with any view of disparaging Jenny.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough-bass I contrive to guess at, from its being super-eminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to *say* I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re,* is as conjuring as *Baralipton.*

It is hard to stand alone in an age like this,—(constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I very believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut), to remain, as it were, singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art, which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions.—Yet, rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds, are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—spite of its inaptitude, to thrid the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren

attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's "Laughing Audience"!) immovable, or affecting some faint emotion—till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment;* or like that

—— Party in a parlour
All silent, and all DAMNED.

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying; to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and

be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor and the oppression.—Like that disappointing book in Patmos; or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton, doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—"Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*. A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so

many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at the last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labour, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist."

Something like this "SCENE TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*——; who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.[1]

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure

[1] I have been there, and still would go,
'Tis like a little heaven below.—DR. WATTS.

struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim Abbey, some five-and-thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be *that*, in which the Psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings—or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind)—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

> —— rapt above earth,
> And possess joys not promised at my birth.

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive—impatient to overcome her " earthly " with his " heavenly,"—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant Tritons, *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wits' end ; —clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—

priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenuous—he is Pope, —and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too,—tri-coroneted like himself!—I am converted, and yet a Protestant ;—at once *malleus hereticorum*, and myself grand heresiarch : or three heresies centre in my person :—I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus—Gog and Magog—what not ?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith ; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

Charles Lamb.

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